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*James B. Creel,*

# THE PLEA TO RESTORE THE APOSTOLIC CHURCH

By  
*overland*  
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MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL

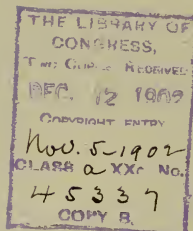


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TO ALL

Who love and make

*The Plea to Restore the Apostolic Church,*

*This little book is dedicated by*

THE AUTHOR.



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## PREFACE.

No apology is offered for this little book. No literary claims are made for it. No one is responsible for its teaching but its author. It is the production of an humble minister of the gospel of the Christ, who has sought, in plain and vigorous language, to instruct and edify rather than please the critic with beautiful diction of rhetorical finish.

In preparing the program for "Forefathers' Day," A. L. Orcutt, Indianapolis, Ind., requested the writer to prepare a brief address, which could be read or delivered in ten minutes, on "*The Plea to Restore the Apostolic Church.*" A short time afterward, L. C. Wilson, Elwood, Ind., requested a more extended address on the same subject, to appear in his book, "Twentieth Century Sermons and Addresses." The present production is the expansion of the previous addresses.

This little work claims to be a plain and forcible presentation of THE PLEA TO RESTORE THE APOSTOLIC CHURCH, in all its leading phases. It contains the close study and best thought of the author, on the subject considered, covering a period of thirty years of reading, writing and preaching. As to its

teaching, or doctrine, it claims to be in strict accord with the plain teaching of the Word of God. In this respect, the author fears no just criticism or successful confutation. This work is also designed to be an introduction, or forerunner, of a larger work entitled "THE FAITH," which the author is now putting into manuscript, and hopes ere long to have it appear in book form.

To all those who desire to know the full import of the Plea of "the fathers," which is THE PLEA TO RESTORE THE APOSTOLIC CHURCH, which is now being made by that people who claim to be, as individuals, simply disciples of Christ, or Christians only; and who claim to be, in church relation, simply churches of Christ only, this little book is most earnestly commended. To young preachers of the gospel and to the common people generally, this little text-book on "Our Plea" is especially addressed. To all who read it, may it indeed prove a blessing is the earnest prayer of the author.

JAMES C. CREEL.

PLATTSBURG, Mo., Aug. 20, 1902.

## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.

It occurs to the author that it might be well to have a brief biographical sketch of himself appear in this little book. The following is written by the author himself, though it appears in the third person as the better form :

James Cowherd Creel was born Apr. 13, 1846, on a farm in Green County, Ky., of poor but respectable parents, whose names were Henry Clay Creel and Elizabeth Creel. The mother's maiden name was Hatcher, a daughter of Jeremiah and Polly Hatcher. At the age of seven years his father died after a long illness with consumption, leaving a widow and four little children, of which James was the oldest. All the earthly possessions of the family at the death of the father consisted of a few household goods and five dollars in money.

James' parents were pious and devoted Baptists, and hence at a very early age he was inclined to be religious. When he was eight years old he would go and kneel down by his father's grave, pray and try to "get religion." At times, for four or five years, he earnestly and prayerfully "sought religion" according to the old-fashioned Baptist way ; and at the

age of thirteen he made "a profession of religion," was baptized, and joined the Baptist Church at old Mt. Gilead meeting-house, Green County, Ky., Saturday before the fourth Lord's Day in August, 1859. At the age of eighteen years, having learned the way of the Lord more accurately, he, with a great struggle and much mental agony, gave up all denominationalism and became a Christian only, belonging to the church of Christ only. By this act he became identified with that religious body of people who, as individuals, are simply disciples of Christ, or Christians, and, as congregations, are simply churches of Christ, no more nor less. In other words, James ceased to be a "*Baptist Christian*," and ceased to belong to the Baptist denomination, by becoming a Christian *only* and belonging to the church of Christ *only*.

James' opportunities for an education were quite limited, as he had to support a widowed mother and help care for two younger brothers and a sister, which he did by daily labor as a hired farm hand, only attending the winter sessions of the common schools. When nineteen years old he attended a high school for one term, borrowing the money to pay board and tuition. After he was married and had two children he went to school two years: one year to a select school, and one year to Gilead Insti-

tute at Camner, Hart Co., Ky. These two years at school brought on an indebtedness which required ten years, while supporting a little family, to pay principal and interest. These ten years of poverty and struggle will never be forgotten.

When James was born, his dear mother earnestly prayed that her firstborn might become a preacher of the gospel. God heard that mother's prayer, for when the son preached in the presence of that mother for the first time, she arose in the audience, at the close of the sermon, and exclaimed, "*Thank God! The prayer that I have been praying for twenty-six years is answered to-day!*" Though that precious mother has long since gone to her reward, these words are still ringing in the ears of her preacher son. The last words that fell from the lips of that sainted mother to her preacher son are these: "*Grieve not for me. I have no desire to live here. I long to be at rest. Oh, my son, I know what your struggles have been. I have always prayed for you. Be true to the Word of God. Be faithful. Be faithful.*" Often have these precious words cheered the son's heart when it was heavy with pain and sorrow; and for more than a quarter of a century these words have been inscribed in every day-book and copy of the Bible used in private study.

On the 28th of October, 1868, the subject of this sketch was married, in his twenty-third year, to Miss Lucy Francis Gooch, near Monroe, Hart Co., Ky., who has been a faithful Christian wife for thirty-four years; and much of that time she has been in ill health, but patiently and cheerfully she has borne her part of being a poor preacher's wife. To this marriage there have been born six children—two sons and four daughters—all of whom have been reared to be grown men and women, and, so far, with only one death, a son in his twenty-fourth year.

On the first Lord's Day in October, 1871, at Gilead Church, Hart County, Ky., Bro. Creel preached his first sermon on the text, "Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God" (Matt. 5:8). In a few months afterward he was ordained to the Christian ministry by fasting, prayer and laying on of hands; immediately after which he located at Litchfield, Ky., taught school, preached for the church, and a part of the time for two country churches. He next located in the village of White Mills, Hardin County, where he taught a select school for several terms, in the meantime preaching one Lord's Day in each month for the village church and three other contiguous churches. After this he located at Sonora, serving the church here one-fourth

time and devoting balance of time to three other churches. Here he gave up the schoolroom, devoting all his time to preaching to churches and holding protracted meetings. After five years' residence at Sonora he located at Glasgow, Barren County, giving half time to the church there and one Lord's Day each to the churches at Horse Cave and Oakland Station, in the meantime holding many protracted meetings. After two years at Glasgow, he located at Henderson, spending three years here, two of which were given to the Henderson work; he then devoted a whole year in holding protracted meetings in Kentucky, Tennessee, Illinois and Missouri. In January, 1875, he came to Richmond, Mo., where he labored two years for the church, and then located at Plattsburg, his present home, where he has lived for the past sixteen years, three years of which he served the church as its minister.

On Jan. 1, 1888, he began the publication of the *Church Register*, which religious journal he conducted successfully for ten years and seven months, making money each year on the paper; being overworked by preaching every Lord's Day, holding protracted meetings, oral debates, and conducting the paper, he was compelled to sell out the paper, because of nervous prostration. When he sold the paper, with



what he had saved of its earnings he made enough to buy a nice, comfortable home free from all debt, where he now lives, reads, writes, preaches for contiguous churches on Lord's Days and holds protracted meetings. He is the author of several tracts on the following subjects: "The New Birth"; "Should the Sisters Pray and Speak in Public?"; "Can We know that Our Sins are Forgiven?"; "Heartfelt Religion." All these tracts have had quite a sale, of which the last mentioned one has passed through more than five editions of one thousand copies each. He has held a number of oral debates in Kentucky, Iowa, Missouri, Arkansas, with prominent Baptist and Methodist debaters; such men as G. B. Overton, J. D. Taylor, W. C. Taylor, J. H. Biggs, W. P. Throgmorton, Daniel B. Turney and Jacob Ditzler, meeting the last-named gentleman four times. In the past few years he has not taken so much interest in religious debating, but is devoting his whole time to studying the Scriptures, writing, reading from a well-selected library, preaching to churches and holding protracted meetings.

Bro. Creel is now in his fifty-seventh year, weighs 220 pounds, nearly six feet high, dark blue eyes, dark hair, slightly gray, and in the very prime of life. He is a man of strong convictions and always



ready to defend them, or give a reason for the hope that is in him. He loves the simple gospel of the Christ, and his highest ambition of life has been to be a true and successful preacher of the Old Jerusalem gospel as it is given in the New Testament, without any additions or subtractions. Because of his positive way of putting things, some have thought that he was narrow and somewhat contentious in his religious convictions; but those who know him best do not entertain these thoughts.

The author of this little book is now rounding out a ministry in the gospel of thirty-one years, in which he has labored unceasingly without taking as much as one week's vacation in all the thirty-one years. In this ministry he has induced more than two thousand persons to obey the gospel, and thus become Christians. He hopes yet to spend many more years in faithfully proclaiming the gospel of the blessed Christ and in turning sinners to the Lord. He knows his own weaknesses and fully realizes that he has made many mistakes; but he has ever been conscious of an intense desire to know the right and do the right at all times and under all circumstances. He has ever believed in standing up uncompromisingly for "the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints," though the very heavens fall. What-

ever may have been his faults and mistakes, he has ever had a heart that loves the Lord and tries to serve him at all times, and to this merciful Lord and Master he is willing to commit it all.

# THE PLEA TO RESTORE THE APOSTOLIC CHURCH.

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## CHAPTER I.

### THE ORIGIN OF THE PLEA.

Early in the nineteenth century Thomas Campbell, Alexander Campbell, Barton W. Stone, Walter Scott, and others, began the religious Restoration Movement, sometimes called the "Current Reformation." In this Restoration Movement, which is pre-eminently a *restoration* movement and not merely a reformation, it was earnestly sought to reproduce, in all things, especially wherein there had been departure, the faith and practice of the inspired apostles and teachers of Jesus Christ, as now revealed in the New Testament. In doing this, these mighty men of God, often referred to in loving remembrance as "the fathers," made a grand plea, which is none other than THE PLEA TO RESTORE THE APOSTOLIC CHURCH. This same peerless Plea is made to-day by the children of the fathers who have grown to be a great people of more than one million in the United States alone. This people claim to be,

as individual followers of the Christ, simply disciples of Christ, or Christians only; not the only Christians, but Christians *only*; and as congregations, or churches, simply churches of Christ, no more nor less, just what the followers of the Christ were in the beginning before sectarian names and divisions came into existence. A brief history of the origin of this great Plea made by the fathers is of some importance, which now demands attention.

Thomas Campbell, an educated and pious minister of the Presbyterian Church of the "Seceder branch," came from Ireland to Philadelphia in May, 1807. On the presentation of his credentials he was received into the Presbyterian Synod, and at once was assigned by it to the Presbytery of Chartiers in western Pennsylvania, where he began his ministerial work, locating at Washington, a small town of five hundred inhabitants. Mr. Campbell's sympathies were soon aroused by the destitute condition of some who belonged to other branches of the Presbyterian family, who had not for a long time had an opportunity of partaking of the Lord's Supper. In a sermon preparatory to partaking of the Lord's Supper, he felt it his duty to lament the existing divisions, and to suggest that all his pious hearers should, without respect to any sectarian

difference, enjoy the benefits of the communion service. As Mr. Campbell, in this, showed but little respect for the division walls which different parties had built up, he was censured and cited to the Presbytery for trial. The Presbytery found him deserving of censure for not adhering to the "Secession Testimony." Mr. Campbell protested, and the matter was referred to the Synod, after which a committee decided that the charges "were sufficient grounds to infer censure." He submitted to the decision, handing in at the same time a declaration, "that his submission should be understood to mean no more, on his part, than a deference to the judgment of the court, that, by so doing, he might not give offence to his brethren by manifesting a refractory spirit." After this, he soon came to the conclusion to separate himself from all connection with a people who seemed utterly unwilling to tolerate any overture for healing the religious dissensions of the times. This separation occasioned no interruption of his ministerial labors, in which he made the plea for Christian liberality and Christian union upon the basis of the Bible; large numbers continued to attend his ministrations wherever it was in his power to hold meetings; in private houses, groves, and other places, sympathetic audiences gathered to hear

him. In these meetings the sufficiency of the Bible as the sole guide of faith and practice was urged upon the people, and many of them began to accept this preaching and put it into practice. (See "Memoirs of Alexander Campbell," Vol. I., pp. 122-132.)

In a meeting of a very general assembling of those who were in sympathy with the work of Mr. Campbell, he dwelt upon the evils of divisions among professed Christians. He showed that the Word of God was an infallible standard which was all-sufficient and alone-sufficient, as a basis of Christian union and Christian co-operation. He insisted upon a return, in all things, to the simple teaching of the Scriptures, and the abandonment of everything in religion for which there could not be given a divine warrant. He then proclaimed, in reference to faith and doctrine, this great rule or principle, namely: "*Where the Scriptures speak, we speak; where the Scriptures are silent, we are silent.*" At the close of this discourse Mr. Campbell called for an expression of views on the all-important rule enunciated. Many of his hearers accepted it at once as the rule of action in their efforts to bring about a religious reformation or restoration of the primitive order of things. It was then resolved by the meeting to hold another meeting Aug. 17, 1809,

and form it into an association called "The Christian Association of Washington." In the meantime, Mr. Campbell, in conference with several of those associated with him in the new movement, prepared the celebrated "Declaration and Address," which was designed to set forth to the public the nature and the object of the Association and embody the general truths and principles which were to direct and govern this new religious movement.

The "Declaration and Address" set forth the nature and purpose of the Association in this resolution: "That we form ourselves into a religious association under the denomination of 'The Christian Association of Washington,' for the sole purpose of promoting simple evangelical Christianity, free from all mixture of human opinions and inventions of men." The nature of this Association is further declared in this resolution: "That this society [Association] by no means considers itself a church, nor does, at all, assume to itself the power peculiar to such a society; nor do the members, as such, consider themselves as standing connected in that relation; nor as at all associated for the peculiar purposes of church association, but merely as voluntary advocates for church reformation, and as possessing the powers common to all individuals who may please

to associate, in a peaceful and orderly manner, for any lawful purpose; namely, the disposal of their time, counsel and property, as they may see cause."

The "Declaration and Address" also contained this resolution: "That this society, formed for the sole purpose of promoting simple evangelical Christianity, shall, to the uttermost of its power, countenance and support such ministers, and such only, as exhibit a manifest conformity to the original standard, in conversation and doctrine, in zeal and diligence; only such as reduce to practice that simple, original form of Christianity expressly exhibited upon the sacred page, without attempting to inculcate anything of human authority, of private opinion, or inventions of men, as having any place in the constitution, faith or worship of the Christian Church, or anything as matter of Christian faith or duty, for which there can not be expressly produced a 'Thus saith the Lord,' either in express terms or by approved precedent."

As embodying the general truths or principles which were to direct and govern this religious movement, the "Declaration and Address" set forth thirteen distinct propositions prefaced with these remarkable statements: "Let none imagine that the subjoined propositions are at all intended as an over-



ture toward a new creed or standard for the church, or as anywise designed to be made a term of communion; nothing can be further from our intention. They are merely designed to open up the way, that we may come fairly and firmly to original ground upon clear and certain premises, and take up things just as the apostles left them, that thus, disentangled from accruing embarrassments of intervening ages, we may stand with evidence upon the same ground on which the church stood at the beginning.”—*Memoirs of Alexander Campbell*, Vol. I., pp. 243, 256-262.

The thirteen “subjoined propositions” contained all the grand principles which guided and directed this new religious movement in its efforts to return to the “original ground,” in all things, occupied by the inspired apostles of the Christ. In other words, these propositions are the embodiment of the fundamental principles which guided the fathers in making *The Plea to Restore the Apostolic Church*. The first three propositions are here transcribed:

“1. That the Church of Christ upon earth is essentially, intentionally and constitutionally one; consisting of all those in every place that profess their faith in Christ and obedience to him in all things according to the Scriptures, and that mani-

fest the same by their tempers and conduct; and none else, as none else can be truly and properly called Christians.

“2. That, although the Church of Christ upon earth must necessarily exist in particular and distinct societies, locally separate one from another, yet there ought to be no schism, no uncharitable divisions among them. They ought to receive each other, as Christ Jesus hath also received them, to the glory of God. And, for this purpose, they ought all to walk by the same rule; to mind and speak the same things, and be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.

“3. That, in order to do this, nothing ought to be inculcated upon Christians as articles of faith, nor required of them as terms of communion, but what is expressly taught and enjoined upon them in the Word of God. Nor ought anything to be admitted as of divine obligation in their church constitution and managements, but what is expressly enjoined by the authority of our Lord Jesus Christ and his apostles upon the New Testament church, either in express terms or by approved precedent.”

This remarkable “Declaration and Address,” in all its matter, made up fifty-four closely printed pages, and will ever merit particular attention, as

it laid the very foundation of the great Restoration Movement of the nineteenth century. While the proof-sheets of this remarkable document were being read, Alexander Campbell, a young man, the son of Thomas Campbell, arrived in October, 1809, from the University of Glasgow, Scotland. He carefully read what his father had written, and at once assented to it, becoming a zealous advocate and preacher of the faith. Alexander soon saw that the great principles of the "Declaration and Address" would compel him to give up many of his previous religious notions and convictions. With great diligence he began to restudy the Scriptures; and in a short time he was immersed on the simple confession of his faith in the Christ, by Elder Mathias Luce, a Baptist minister, on Wednesday, June 12, 1812, in Buffaloe Creek, near his residence. In this step his father, mother, eldest sister, his wife and three others followed him. In this step it may be truly said that Alexander Campbell, the son, became the recognized leader in the Restoration Movement. (See *Millennial Harbinger* for 1848, p. 283.)

In a short time the local congregation meeting at Brush Run meeting-house, where the Campbells held their membership, became immersionists, con-

stituting a local church of baptized believers. In 1813 this local church of baptized believers united with the Redstone Association of Baptists. In this act the Campbells and their colaborers became identified with the Baptists upon the express stipulation that they were to be guided, in all things, solely by the Word of God. (See *Millennial Harbinger* for 1848, p. 346.) In 1823, the congregation of which Alexander Campbell was a member, joined the Mahoning Association of Baptists, who were far more liberal toward those who were seeking to return in all things to original Christianity. At this time such evangelists and preachers as Walter Scott and others were preaching the primitive gospel and appealing to all Christians to return in faith and practice to the apostles. The people by the hundreds responded to the proclamation of the ancient gospel.

As The Plea to Restore the Apostolic Church began to grow and take a vital hold on the people throughout the Mahoning Association of Baptists, the Association mutually dissolved in 1830 as a Baptist organization, and entered, as local churches, into the reformatory or Restorative Movement. In disbanding as a Baptist ecclesiastical organization, they ceased to be Baptists or Baptist churches by becom-

ing simply disciples of Christ or Christians only, and churches of Christ only.

In 1801, a great religious revival began at Cane Ridge meeting-house, near Paris, Ky., which swept over a large portion of the State. Out of this great revival, there grew up in Kentucky a similar religious movement, led by Barton W. Stone and others, to that inaugurated by the Campbells in western Pennsylvania and western Virginia in 1809. The movement of Stone and others coalesced with the movement of the Campbells in 1831 and 1832. However, all those who were first associated with Stone did not go into the Restoration Movement of the Campbells. They appeared to still cling to some of their early religious errors, and by the way of distinction they were spoken of as the "Old Christian Order," or "Christian Connection," and in derision they were called "Newlights," or "Stoneites." They are, to-day, a small people in number, and are still in bondage to denominationalism. In the East, and in some other localities, they claim to be "the Christian Church," and as individuals wear the name "Christians." They are, sometimes, in religious statistics, confounded with those who have given up all denominationalism, and who make The Plea to

Restore the Apostolic Church, as first inaugurated by the Campbells and their associates.

The preceding is a brief and somewhat imperfect history of the origin of The Plea to Restore the Apostolic Church. Its facts and statements are certainly according to recognized history. A close study of the origin of the Plea made by the fathers of the Restoration Movement of the nineteenth century will greatly increase the appreciation of that Plea. In its very origin much is to be learned concerning the Plea that can not be learned elsewhere.

## CHAPTER II.

### WHAT CALLED FORTH THE PLEA.

Often a work, or some plea made, is more fully appreciated when it is learned what called forth that work or plea. The Plea to Restore the Apostolic Church was called forth because of grave departure or falling away from "the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints." Modern denominationalism, with its warring sects and conflicting creeds, is unquestionable proof that there have been serious departures from pure New Testament Christianity. Furthermore, the apostle Paul foretells of a coming departure, or "falling away from the faith," in these words: "But the Spirit saith expressly, that in later times some shall fall away from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of demons, through the hypocrisy of men that speak lies, branded in their own conscience as with a hot iron; forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God created to be received with thanksgiving by them that believe and know the truth" (1 Tim. 4:1-4).

Again the same apostle says: "Now we beseech you, brethren, touching the coming of our Lord

Jesus Christ, and our gathering together unto him; to the end that ye be not quickly shaken from your mind, nor yet be troubled either by spirit, or by word, or by epistle from us, as that the day of the Lord is just at hand; let no man beguile you in any wise: for it will not be, except the falling away come first, and the man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition, he that opposeth and exalteth himself against all that is called God or that is worshipped; so that he sitteth in the temple of God, setting himself forth as God" (2 Thess. 2:1-4).

It appears that this falling away from the faith, as foretold by the apostle, was to begin among the elders and teachers of the church, as indicated in these words of Paul to the elders or bishops at Ephesus: "Take heed unto yourselves, and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit hath made you bishops, to feed the church of the Lord that he purchased with his own blood. I know that after my departing grievous wolves shall enter in among you, not sparing the flock; and from among your own selves shall men arise speaking perverse things to draw away the disciples after them" (Acts 20:17, 28-30).

To Timothy, Paul gives this solemn charge: "I charge thee in the sight of God, and of Christ Jesus



who shall judge the quick and dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom; preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but, having itching ears, will heap to themselves teachers after their own lusts; and will turn away their ears from the truth and turn aside unto fables" (2 Tim. 4:1-4).

In the primitive churches of Christ there was a plurality of elders or bishops or pastors in each local congregation, as is to be learned from these words: "And when they [Paul and Barnabas] had appointed for them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord on whom they believed" (Acts 14:23). These persons "appointed elders" were so called because they were elder men, or men of age and experience, and they were called "bishops" because they took the oversight of the local church, and they were called "pastors" because they ruled and fed the local flock. The terms "elders," "bishops," "pastors," in the New Testament, designate the one and same class of persons in the local church of God, indicating the different phases of the work of the eldership. After a time, some one elder or bishop or pastor became,

from some cause or other, more prominent in the church than other fellow elders, pastors or bishops, and he was soon styled *the* elder, *the* pastor or *the* bishop of the church. In this idea and departure came the notion of "*the bishop*," the metropolitan bishop, the diocesan bishop, finally culminating into the first full-grown pope, who claimed to be *the Pastor* of the whole church of God! Thus, step by step, modern ecclesiasticism and apostacy were born among the elders and teachers of the primitive churches. In proof of this gradual growth of departure and change from the simplicity of the original order of things, some quotations from church historians are here given.

Coleman's "Ancient Christianity Exemplified," page 97, says, in reference as to how these changes were made, or brought about, these words: "1. In the distinction between bishops and presbyters [elders]. In the college of equal and co-ordinate presbyters, some one would naturally act as moderator or presiding officer; age, talent, influence or ordination by the apostles might give one an accidental superiority over his fellows, and appropriate to him the standing office of president of the presbytery. To this office the title of bishop was assigned; and with the office and the title began to be associated

the authority also of a distinct order. Jerome alleges that the standing office and authority of a bishop were a necessary expedient to still the cravings and strife for preferment which, by instigation of Satan, arose in process of time among presbyters. Whatever may have been the cause, a distinction began to be made, in the course of the second century, between bishops and presbyters [elders], which finally resulted, in the century following, in the establishment of the episcopal prerogatives."

Neander, in his "Church History," page 119, says in reference to "the changes in the discipline of the Christian Church after the apostolic age," these words: "The change which had the most extensive influence on the form of the Christian Church, in this period, related particularly to three points: (a) The separation between bishops and presbyters, and the development of the monarchico-episcopal government. (b) The separation between spiritual persons and the laity, and the formation of the caste of priests in contradiction to the evangelic notion of the Christian priesthood. And (c) the multiplication of church officers."

Mosheim, in his "Church History," page 38, in speaking of the ministers of the church and its form

of government, says: "The rulers of the church were called either presbyters [elders] or bishops—titles which, in the New Testament, are undoubtedly applied to the same order of men. These were persons of eminent gravity, and such as had distinguished themselves by their sanctity and merit. Their particular functions were not always the same; for while some of them confined their labors to the instruction of the people, others contributed in different ways to the edification of the church. Hence, the distinction between teaching and ruling presbyters has been adopted by certain learned men. But if ever this distinction existed, which I neither affirm nor deny, it certainly did not continue long, since it is manifest that St. Paul requires that all bishops or presbyters be qualified, and ready to teach and instruct." On page 39, he says: "Let none, however, confound the bishops of this primitive and golden period of the church with those of whom we read in the following ages; for though they were both distinguished by the same name, yet they differed in many respects. A bishop, during the first and second century, was a person who had the care of one Christian assembly, which, at that time, was, generally speaking, small enough to be contained in a private house. In this assembly he acted, not

so much with the authority of a master, as with the zeal and diligence of a faithful servant."

This work of apostacy or departure from the primitive faith and practice began even in the days of Paul, in some form. Paul says, in reference to the "falling away" and the "man of sin," these words: "For the mystery of lawlessness doth already work; only there is one that restraineth now, until he be taken out of the way" (2 Thess. 2:7). Thus it is seen from Scripture and church history that there has been departure or "falling away from the faith;" and this has called forth *The Plea to Restore the Apostolic Church*. This departure, culminating in modern denominationalism, with all its party strife and divisions among the professed followers of the Christ, moved Thomas Campbell and his associates to earnestly plead for a complete return to original ground where primitive Christian union could be found and enjoyed. *The Plea* of the fathers was largely born in the idea of Christian liberty and Christian union and Christian co-operation, which had been destroyed, in a great measure, by sectarian divisions growing out of departures from the apostolic faith and practice.



## CHAPTER III.

### WHAT IS THE APOSTOLIC CHURCH?

To thoroughly understand and appreciate The Plea to Restore the Apostolic Church, the question, *What is the Apostolic Church?* needs to be fully answered and explained. The importance of this is seen at once in the fact that the Restoration Movement of the nineteenth century had sole reference to the reproducing or restoring *the Apostolic Church*. Hence full explanation and careful definition of terms are needed just here.

The word "church," in its New Testament use, means, first, in its limited sense, a local congregation, or assembly, of persons *called out* of any kind. The word (*ekklesia*) translated "assembly" in Acts 19:41, designating the "assembly" or mob assembled at the instigation of Demetrius, is the very same word, in the New Testament, translated "church" more than one hundred times. The word so translated does not of itself indicate the exact nature of the assembly called out; this must be learned from the circumstances or connections of the word. In Acts 19:39 the word translated "assembly," in this particular verse, means a "*lawful assembly*;" this is

not indicated by the word translated "assembly," but by the modifying term "lawful." In Acts 19:41 the very same word is again translated "assembly," and here the circumstances show that the word, in this particular verse, means an unlawful mob called out by the infuriated Demetrius. Thus the word "church," or the word translated "church," means literally an assembly, or congregation, of any kind called out by, or from, any source. In its particular New Testament or religious sense, the word "church" means an assembly of baptized believers *called out*; called of God by Christ through the gospel into the fellowship, worship and service of God. Paul says: "But we are bound to give thanks to God alway for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, for God chose you from the beginning unto salvation in sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth, whereunto he called you through our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Thess. 2:13, 14). Peter says: "And the God of all grace, who called you unto his eternal glory in Christ, after that ye have suffered a little while, shall himself perfect, stablish, strengthen you" (1 Pet. 5:10). To be called "unto his eternal glory *in Christ*," means called "unto his eternal glory" *by Christ*; so it reads in the common or old



version. Jesus himself says: "For I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance" (Matt. 9:13). Jesus calls sinners to repentance *through* the gospel; through all the motives and invitations of the gospel, the Christ calls sinners to repentance, and thus calls them out, out of the world into the fellowship, worship and service of the Father. This call being a moral call addressed only to sinners, it necessarily follows that the church is composed only of those who are capable of hearing the call, believing and obeying it. Again, Jesus says: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved" (Mark 16:16), which means the same thing as to say: "He that believeth and is baptized shall enter into the church." This he clearly teaches in saying to Nicodemus: "Except a man be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (John 3:5). Therefore, *the church* means an assembly, or congregation, of baptized believers *called out*, called of God *by Christ through* the gospel into the fellowship, worship and service of God.

In its extended sense, not in its local sense, *the church* means all the true followers of the Christ, all Christians in the aggregate, meaning the whole body of Christ, "the kingdom of heaven," or "the kingdom of God" on earth. *The church* in its extended

or broad sense is used interchangeably with the expression "the kingdom of heaven" or "the kingdom of God," as is seen in these words: "And I also say unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 16:18, 19). The only distinction, perhaps, between "the church" in its broad sense, and "the kingdom of heaven," or "the kingdom of God," is, that "the church" is composed of all the children of God on the earth, while "the kingdom of heaven" is composed of all the family of God on earth and in heaven.

The Christ said to Simon Peter: "Upon this rock I will build *my church*" (Matt. 16:18). It is then *Christ's church*, or the church *of Christ*, for he builded it. But Christ builded the church through the ministry of his inspired apostles. He gave them this world-wide commission: "Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you; and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world" (Matt. 28:19, 20). Paul speaks of himself "as a wise master builder" in laying the foundation

of "the church of God that is at Corinth" (1 Cor. 3:10). What is here true of Paul is evidently true of all the apostles, in that they were also wise master builders of the church of Christ. Therefore, Christ through the ministry of his divinely inspired and commissioned apostles builded the church, which is the one Apostolic Church, a divine institution, builded by the divine Lord and Master through the preaching of inspired men.

In the beginning the Apostolic Church, as founded by Christ through his apostles, was just what he would have it be in these particulars: *its faith, its doctrine, its organization, its government, its unity, its terms of fellowship, its terms of admission, its worship*. Since Christ is the sole head of the church and its supreme lawgiver, there can be no additions to these things nor subtractions therefrom. What the Christ has done, and what he has done through his inspired apostles, needs no improvement and can not be improved upon. The Apostolic Church, in the daily life and practices of its members, may have been quite imperfect, and doubtless was, but in the eight foregoing particulars it was just what its divine founder would have it be. Some attention will now be given to these essential particulars.

1. ITS FAITH.—The faith of the Apostolic Church was faith in the Christ, its divine founder. Everything centered in the Christ with the apostles. The Christ, with them, was the beginning and the end of all things. He was “head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all” (Eph. 1:23).

2. ITS DOCTRINE.—The doctrine of the Apostolic Church was the doctrine of the Christ, which was preached and taught by the inspired apostles and inspired teachers, who preached and taught all things whatsoever commanded by the Christ. Jesus said this of his doctrine: “My teaching is not mine, but his that sent me” (John 7:16). Hence, the teaching, or doctrine, of Christ is the doctrine of God. John says: “Whosoever goeth onward and abideth not in the teaching of Christ, hath not God: he that abideth in the teaching, the same hath both the Father and the Son” (2 John 9).

3. ITS ORGANIZATION.—The organization of the Apostolic Church consisted solely in the organization of the local congregation or local church; and these local churches were called “the churches of Christ” (Rom. 16:16). There was no aggregating of any number of local churches of Christ into some ecclesiastical organization in the days of the apostles.

The craze of organization had not as yet reached the primitive churches. These local churches voluntarily co-operated, as independent churches of Christ, in spreading abroad the gospel and in every good word and work, while all "ecclesiastical" organization was exhausted in the local church.

4. ITS GOVERNMENT.—The government of the Apostolic Church was wholly congregational, in which the law of Christ was supreme in all things. Each local congregation, or local church, was composed of "saints," "bishops" or "elders" or "pastors" and "deacons" (Phil. 1:1), in which the bishops or elders or pastors took the oversight, taught and ruled the local church, while the deacons were the servants thereof. The idea of grouping the local churches of Christ in a given community or district of country into one organized government, to be presided over and ruled by one man called a "priest" or "bishop," is born of the apostasy from the faith.

5. ITS UNITY.—The unity of the Apostolic Church consisted in the spiritual oneness of all those in Christ, where there can be neither Jew nor Greek, neither bond nor free, neither male nor female; for "all are one man in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3:28). This unity was also a oneness, or unity, in

the faith in the Christ and in the doctrine taught by the Christ through the inspired apostles. All those of this spiritual oneness in Christ and the oneness in the faith in the Christ and in the doctrine of Christ, made up the one primitive church of Christ, the one Apostolic Church.

6. ITS TERMS OF FELLOWSHIP.—The terms of fellowship of the Apostolic Church were these: (1) Faith in the Christ; (2) obedience to him in all things. Opinions and theories of men were never made tests of Christian fellowship in the Apostolic Church. Whatever is a gospel condition of salvation, or entrance into the one body of Christ, the Apostolic Church, that, and that only, should be made a test of Christian fellowship. This is true from the fact that whatever is necessary to salvation, or necessary to put one into Christ, puts that one into fellowship with Christ and with all those who are in Christ. Faith in the Christ and obedience to him are the gospel conditions of salvation, the conditions by which a person enters into Christ and into the Apostolic Church; and this faith and obedience, persisted in, keep that person in Christ and in his fellowship. Therefore, faith in the Christ and obedience to him are the only and sole tests of fellowship in the Apostolic Church.

7. ITS TERMS OF ADMISSION.—The terms of admission into the Apostolic Church are simple and plain. They are these: Faith in the Christ, repentance, confession of the Christ, baptism. These may be summed up in these words: *Faith in the Christ and obedience to him*, or being “*born again*.” To be “born again” is to “*be born of water and the Spirit*.” The Christ gives the terms of admission into the kingdom of God, the Apostolic Church, in these words: “Except a man be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God” (John 3:5). To “be born of water and the Spirit” means to *be begotten* by the Spirit in being made a penitent believer in Christ by the Spirit through the Word of God, and then being baptized. In other words, a person is “born of the Spirit,” or “begotten of the Spirit,” when he believes in Christ and repents; and he is “born of water” when he is baptized. These are the terms of admission into “the kingdom of God,” the Apostolic Church.

8. ITS WORSHIP.—The worship of the Apostolic Church is the simple worship of the Father in spirit and in truth, through the Christ, the one mediator between God and man. Jesus says, of the true worship of God, these words: “But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall wor-



ship the Father in spirit and truth: for such doth the Father seek to be his worshippers. God is a Spirit; and they that worship him must worship in spirit and truth" (John 4:23, 24). It is said of the three thousand converted on the day of Pentecost: "And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and the prayers" (Acts 2:42). The primitive disciples of Christ met upon the first day of the week for worship in prayer, praise, reading the Scriptures, exhortation, teaching, fellowship and the partaking of the Lord's Supper. It appears that the primitive disciples, or churches, met upon the first day of every week; and the prime object of the meeting was "to break bread," or partake of the "memorial supper," while often what is called "preaching" was only incidental. This passage is to the point here: "And upon the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread, Paul discoursed with them, intending to depart on the morrow; and prolonged his speech until midnight" (Acts 20:7).

The worship of the Apostolic Church was plain and simple, without any show or display whatever. Every one as a Christian priest offered praise and spiritual incense directly to the Father through



Christ, the great High Priest. The spectacular of much of the modern worship had not as yet corrupted the simple worship of the primitive churches of Christ.



## CHAPTER IV.

### WHAT THE PLEA DOES NOT MEAN.

To get before the mind clearly and fully just what 'The Plea to Restore the Apostolic Church' does mean, it will be well, in the first place, to learn what the Plea does *not* mean; and then it can be more clearly seen what the Plea *does mean*. In looking at all sides of any question, the negative side must also have proper attention. In doing this, a full presentation of the whole question, or subject, can be made. With these explanatory words, special attention is invited to the following negative propositions:

1st. The Plea to Restore the Apostolic Church does *not* mean simply a reformation of some church, or "the church."

The original church of Christ, the Apostolic Church, in its faith, doctrine, organization, government, unity, terms of fellowship, terms of admission and worship, needs no reformation. The Apostolic Church, in these particulars, is just what its divine founder wants, or would have it be. Then it needs no reformation and can not be reformed. It is true some of the fathers spoke of The Plea to Restore the

Apostolic Church as "the reformation of the church," or "the Current Reformation;" but a close study of the writings and preaching of the fathers will show that they spoke of "the reformation of the church" in the sense of the original church of Christ being *restored* in all things wherein there had been departure. The reformation of some church, or even "the church," is not what the fathers sought when they began their work early in the nineteenth century. There have been many reformations of some church or "the church," and the result has uniformly been the increase of denominational or sectarian churches. John Wesley sought to *reform* the Church of England, and he did good in a certain direction; but at the same time his reformation has produced some seventeen Methodist parties, or denominational churches! Something more than a mere reformation of any church is demanded because of "the falling away from the faith." Therefore, The Plea to Restore the Apostolic Church does not mean simply a reformation of some church, or even "the church."

2d. The Plea to Restore the Apostolic Church does *not* mean another church, or some new church.

There are, already, too many churches, of the kind, in the world to-day, and new churches at that. The religious world, of the present age, is already

burdened with the multiplied sectarian or denominational churches. These sectarian churches in their divisions and unholy strife are condemned by the teaching of the Word of God. What the world needs, and will always need as long as sin is in it, is the one *old* church, the original church of Christ, the one original Apostolic Church, in its primitive faith, doctrine and simplicity. The fathers never thought for one moment of starting another church, or some new church, in the Restoration Movement. Neither did they claim to be *a* church nor even *the* church. It is true that some few of their children, who have very narrow conceptions of the church of Christ, may make the absurd claim of being "*the* church of Christ." The fathers and all their informed associates claimed to be, as individual followers of the Christ, simply disciples of Christ, or Christians only, and as congregations of baptized believers, simply "churches of Christ," no more nor less. Therefore, The Plea to Restore the Apostolic Church does not mean another church, or some new church.

3d. The Plea to Restore the Apostolic Church does *not* mean another denomination or sect.

All denominationalism or sectarianism among professed Christians is exceedingly sinful in the sight of the dear Lord, and positively forbidden by his holy

Word. Like all other sins, denominationalism must be repented of and forever abandoned in order to meet the full approval of the great Head of the church. Paul expressly says: "That there should be no schism [sects or divisions] in the body [the body of Christ, the church]; but that the members should have the same care one for another" (1 Cor. 12:25). All denominationalism, or sectarianism, is wholly subversive of the unity of the one body of Christ, the one Apostolic Church. The original church of Christ was not a denomination or a sect, except when it was characterized in derision as such by some of its ancient opposers. The bigoted Jews called the early Christians a "sect" (Acts 28:22). But no apostle ever accepted the idea that the followers of Christ were a sect or a denomination. In the very nature of things, those who made the Plea to return to apostolic Christianity, cannot be a denomination or a sect. Therefore, The Plea to Restore the Apostolic Church does *not* mean another denomination or sect.

4th. The Plea to Restore the Apostolic Church does *not* mean another human creed, human confession of faith, or human rule of faith and practice.

All human creeds, human confessions of faith and human rules of faith and practice have pro-

duced all the denominations and sects that have rent the church of God on the earth. For instance, take up any one of the creeds or confessions of faith, or rules of faith and practice, of any one of the leading modern denominations, and count the different parties or sects produced by them. These sects or parties in religion can be counted by the scores; yes, even by the hundreds, where these human creeds, confessions of faith and rules of faith and practice are claimed as bonds of reunion and communion among professed Christians. Look out on the religious world to-day, and behold the number of sects and parties that are marshaled under the banner of conflicting human creeds! All these human creeds, human confessions of faith and human rules of faith and practice, as bonds of union and fellowship among professed Christians, are a subversion of the law of Christ and a reflection upon the wisdom and goodness of God. These human creeds and human rules of faith and practice, as bonds of union and fellowship among Christians, virtually say that God, in his infinite wisdom, has wholly failed to make all the necessary provisions for the guidance of his people in all faith, practice and fellowship.

It was the division and party strife caused by human creeds, human confessions of faith and hu-

man rules of faith and practice, which excited the righteous indignation of the sainted Thomas Campbell, and moved him to plead for Christian liberty and Christian union by returning to apostolic Christianity. These grand men who first sought the restoration of the Apostolic Church had felt and fully realized the galling bondage of human creeds and human rules of faith and practice. Hence, they made an unceasing war upon all these humanisms as bonds of union and communion among God's people. Nothing could have been more objectionable or obnoxious to them than the idea of another human creed, or human confession of faith, or human rule of faith and practice, in their efforts to return to original apostolic Christianity. Therefore, *The Plea to Restore the Apostolic Church* does not mean another human creed, or human confession of faith, or human rule of faith and practice.

Having now cleared some rubbish out of the way, and removed some mistaken ideas and notions in reference to the Plea, the way is now clearly opened up for learning just what this matchless Plea *does mean*. Succeeding chapters will give full and complete explanation, or tell just *what* the Plea is. To these succeeding chapters special attention is invited in order to get a comprehensive view of the Plea.



## CHAPTER V.

### WHAT THE PLEA DOES MEAN.

The work now to be done is that of affirmation. This will be done by first presenting affirmative propositions, followed by necessary and somewhat exhaustive argument. To these propositions, and the argument, careful attention is invited.

1st. The Plea to Restore the Apostolic Church means *a restoration*.

By *restoration* is meant a complete return "to original ground and take up things just as the apostles left them," and thus reproduce or restore New Testament Christianity in all things. It means the going back beyond all denominations, all human creeds, all decrees of Popes, Councils, Synods, Assemblies and Associations, to the Christ and the inspired apostles, and restore all things wherein there has been departure or apostacy. The Plea means the rejection of all human innovations and the restoration of the divine model in all things "that pertain to life and godliness."

The advocates of The Plea to Restore the Apostolic Church, those who claim to be simply disciples of Christ or Christians only, and belong to the

church of Christ only, occupy a unique position. The early reformers, such men as Luther, Calvin, Knox, Wesley and others, sought mightily to accomplish a reformation of the then existing corrupt church or churches. They did a great and lasting work in their way; but none of them appears to have sought the *restoration* of the original primitive church of Christ. The attempted work of all these early reformers was only a *reformation*, while the great work of the advocates of *The Plea to Restore the Apostolic Church* is a *restoration*.

2d. *The Plea to Restore the Apostolic Church* means *the restoration* of the one divine creed and the one divine rule of faith and practice.

The word "creed," from *credo*, I believe, means, strictly speaking, a summary of what one believes. There is this distinction between a *creed* and a *rule* of faith and practice, namely: a *creed* is a summary of what is believed, a summary of "the faith," while a *rule* of faith and practice is "the faith" itself. In other words, the true *creed* is the summary of the New Testament, while the true *rule* of faith and practice is the New Testament itself. The one divine *creed*, the summary of the whole religion of the Christ, the summary of the New Testament, is expressed in this one plain proposition: JESUS IS

THE CHRIST, THE SON OF GOD. If this proposition is true, then all else is true; then all that Jesus said, did and commanded through his apostles is true; then Jesus is divine, and "he died for our sins" and arose from the dead the third day. This one divine creed is simple, containing just one article expressed in one simple proposition; yet, at the same time, it is all-comprehensive, taking in the whole messiahship, lordship and divinity of Jesus. No one can believe more concerning the Christ than is expressed in this one heaven-born proposition or creed. This one divine creed needs no revision, no addition thereto nor subtraction therefrom, nor any improvement whatever to meet the religious wants of all the ages to come. What the world needs to-day is the restoration of the one divine creed and the complete abandonment of all human or man-made creeds.

The one divine rule of faith and practice, in the religion of Jesus Christ, is the Word of God, especially the New Testament, which is of special authority under the reign of the Christ. This is all-sufficient and alone-sufficient to teach and guide man in all religious faith and practice, being a lamp unto his feet and a light unto his path. An inspired apostle says: "Every scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correc-

tion, for instruction which is in righteousness: that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work" (2 Tim. 3:16, 17). Again: "For the word of God is living, and active, and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing even to the dividing of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and quick to discern the thoughts and intents of the heart" (Heb. 4:12). The apostle James says: "Wherefore putting away all filthiness and overflowing of wickedness, receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls" (Jas. 1:21). Paul says: "For I am not ashamed of the gospel: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first and also to the Greek" (Rom. 1:16). Jesus says: "The words that I have spoken unto you are spirit, and are life" (John 6:63). From all these Scripture statements, the conclusion is reached that the Word of God is all-sufficient and alone-sufficient as the one divine rule of faith and practice.

In the beginning, before there had been a falling away from "the faith," and for more than a hundred years after the establishment of the church of Christ on the earth, the disciples of Christ had no other rule of faith and practice than the Word of God, the word of the inspired apostles and inspired

teachers of Christ. When false teachers arose and ambitious men began their evil work in the churches, then human creeds and human rules of faith and practice were born to curse the church of God with sects and sectarianism. The restoration of the one divine creed, means the destruction of all sects and sectarianism among professed Christians.

3d. The Plea to Restore the Apostolic Church means *the restoration* of the faith and practice of the inspired apostles of the Christ.

In the New Testament there is a complete inspired presentation of the faith and practice of the apostles. Then to the New Testament all must go to learn all things spoken or taught by the apostles of the Christ, as they were moved and inspired by the Holy Spirit, or as the Holy Spirit gave them utterance. It is said of the apostles when they began their work on the day of Pentecost: "And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance" (Acts 2:4).

*The faith* of the apostles means the faith, or belief, they themselves exercised and commanded. The faith commanded by the apostles, and that which they exercised, is a personal faith, faith in a person; it is faith in the divine person, Jesus the

Christ, the Son of God. With the apostles the question was not, *What* do you believe? but, *Whom* do you believe? or, *In whom* do you believe? Do you believe *in the Christ?* is the one vital question in reference to the exercising of saving faith, the faith commanded by the apostles. Hence, when the jailer asked the soul-stirring question, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" an inspired apostle answered, "*Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ*, and thou shalt be saved" (Acts 16:31). Faith in the Christ is faith that trusts in the Christ; and trust in the Christ is to take the Christ at his word and do what he commands. No one has faith in the Christ, nor trusts in the Christ, that does not obey the Christ in his commandments. Trust in the Christ goes no further than humble obedience to the Christ goes. The sick patient trusts in the physician to get well just as far as he takes the medicine and does what the physician says. Just so, man must trust in the divine Physician for the healing of his soul by obeying him.

Faith in the Christ is saving faith because it is faith in the one personal Saviour. Faith in the Christ is the "one faith" commanded by the apostles in the gospel. This "one faith" is produced, or comes, by hearing, hearing the word of the Christ. Paul says: "So belief [faith] cometh of hearing,

and hearing by the word of Christ" (Rom. 10:17). Faith in the Christ also means the belief of what the Christ has said and what is affirmed of him in the Word of God. It is all folly to say that one has faith in the Christ, and at the same time that one does not believe all that the Christ has said, or what the Word of God has affirmed of the Christ. Faith in the Christ, or faith in what is affirmed of the Christ in the Word of God, is that faith which brings life in the name of the Christ. John says: "Many other signs therefore did Jesus in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book, but these are written, that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing [that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God] ye may have life in his name" (John 20:30). This faith in the Christ is then *the faith* of the apostles, the faith they had and commanded all men to have in order to salvation. The oral confession of this personal faith in the Christ is the one divine *confession of faith* commanded in the gospel, which was revealed to Simon Peter by the Father in heaven (Matt. 16:17, 18). This was the only confession of faith that the inspired apostles demanded of any one. This one divine confession of faith, with repentance, admitted persons to baptism, and, through baptism, admission into the Apostolic Church.



*The practice* of the apostles means all that the apostles did, preached, taught, commanded and wrote for universal observance in all time to come, as they were miraculously endowed by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, as now revealed in the New Testament. In the apostolic commission the Christ commanded his apostles to preach the gospel and teach "all things whatsoever" he had commanded them. That the apostles might remember and teach all things commanded by the Christ, he gave them this special promise: "But the Comforter, even the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said unto you" (John 14:26). Then the practice of the apostles covers the whole ground, and takes in the whole truth as it is in Jesus, and all that the dear Lord would have us to know, to practice and to be. It therefore takes in the whole Apostolic Church in its entirety of faith, doctrine and practice. All of this is the practice of the apostles, as it is now given by divine inspiration in "the new testament of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ."

The restoration of the faith and practice of the apostles means a complete return in all things of faith and practice, wherein there has been a falling



away, to original apostolic faith and teaching. It means the undoing of all false teaching and religious error by reproducing, or restoring, "the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints." It means the going back to the Christ and the inspired apostles, or, rather, the going back to the Christ *through* the inspired apostles, and restoring the Apostolic Church, as it was when first established by the Christ through the apostles. The battle-cry of the great Restoration Movement of the nineteenth century is, "*Back to the Christ!*" But "back to the Christ" means back to the Christ *through* the inspired apostles of the Christ. The world knows nothing of the Christ, neither can it learn anything of the Christ nor go back to the Christ, save *through* the inspired apostles of the Christ. Therefore, the restoration of the faith and practice of the apostles means the going back to the Christ through the apostles, and reproducing the Apostolic Church in all things wherein there has been apostacy.



## CHAPTER VI.

### WHAT THE PLEA DOES MEAN.

[CONTINUED.]

4th. The Plea to Restore the Apostolic Church means *the restoration* of the original unity of the Apostolic Church, or the primitive oneness of the body of Christ.

When a view is taken of the present state of the religious world, it will be seen that the vast majority of professed followers of the Christ are divided into more than three hundred different parties, sects or denominations. What an awful havoc the falling away from "the faith" has produced! It is enough to make the very angels weep, and almost forget that they are "sent forth to do service for the sake of them that shall inherit salvation"! Above all, how painful and displeasing it must be to the dear Lord to behold the divided condition of his professed children!

The blessed Christ earnestly prayed for the unity or oneness of his disciples, in the great intercessory prayer, recorded in these touching words: "Neither for these only do I pray, but for them also that believe on me through their word; that they may

all be one; even as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be in us: that the world may believe that thou didst send me" (John 17:20, 21). What is this unity or oneness for which our dear Lord so earnestly prayed? Surely this prayer of the Son of God is to be answered. This being true, then the meaning of the prayer needs to be carefully studied.

The Christ prayed for all who believe on him through the word of the apostles, "*that they may all be one;*" and they are to be one "*even as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee.*" As the Father is in the Son and the Son in the Father, so are the disciples of Jesus to be one, and thus be one in the Father and in the Son. In nature, character, purpose and work, the Father is in the Son and the Son is in the Father. In other words, the Father and the Son are one in nature, character, purpose and work; and just so the disciples of Jesus are to be one—one in nature, character, purpose and work.

Again, when the Christ prayed that all his disciples might be one as the Father was in him and he in the Father, he prayed "*that they also may be in us*"—in the Father and in the Son. To "*be in us,*" in the Father and in the Son, certainly means to be *one* in the Father and in the Son. To be *in* the Father

and *in* the Son is to be under the complete authority and government of the Father and the Son, and be in fellowship with the Father and with the Son. John says: "Our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ" (1 John 1:3).

To be in the Father and in the Son means the same thing as is expressed in the Scripture phrase "*in Christ.*" It is "*in Christ*" that all the disciples of Jesus are "*one body.*" Hence, Paul says: "So we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and severally members one of another" (Rom. 12:5). Then, the oneness of the disciples of Jesus for which he prayed, is the oneness *in* nature, character, purpose and work of all those "*in Christ.*" This oneness for which Jesus prayed is not oneness in opinion, nor is it mere uniformity in means, ways and methods of Christian work. This oneness "*in Christ*" can be attained only by oneness in the faith in Christ and in the doctrine of Christ. Hence, it may be said that the oneness for which the Christ prayed is oneness in faith and doctrine; for in the oneness in the faith in the Christ and in the doctrine of the Christ, there is the oneness in nature, character, purpose and work. This, then, is the unity of the Apostolic Church, the oneness of the body of Christ.

The unity of the Apostolic Church, or the oneness of the body of Christ, or the oneness in faith and doctrine, is further taught and illustrated in "the unity of the Spirit." Paul gives this admonition: "I therefore, the prisoner in the Lord, beseech you to walk worthily of the calling wherewith ye were called, with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love; giving diligence to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." Then the apostle declares what "the unity of the Spirit" is, in these words: "There is one body, and one Spirit, even as also ye were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all, and through all, and in all (Eph. 4:4-6). Here, then, "the unity of the Spirit," that is, the unity taught or produced by the Holy Spirit, is composed of seven units, as follows: (1) The "*one* body;" (2) the "*one* Spirit;" (3) the "*one* hope;" (4) the "*one* Lord;" (5) the *one* faith; (6) the *one* baptism; (7) the "*one* God and Father of all." Each one of these seven units making up "the unity of the Spirit"—"the unity taught by the Spirit—demands attention.

1. The "*one* body" is the one body of Christ, the one church of Christ, the one Apostolic Church. The apostle says: "But now they are many members, but

one body" (1 Cor. 12:20). Then the apostle further says: "Now ye are the body of Christ, and severally members thereof" (1 Cor. 12:27). The same apostle says: "And he is the head of the body, the church" (Col. 1:18). Christ never had but one human body, and neither has he but one spiritual body, which is composed of all those "in Christ." The inspired apostle declares: "So we, who are many, are one body in Christ" (Rom. 12:5). The oneness of the body of Christ, the church of Christ, the Apostolic Church, is forcibly presented in these words: "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of the body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ. For in one Spirit were we all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether bond or free; and were all made to drink of one Spirit" (1 Cor. 12:12, 13). All of this being true, then sects or denominations among professed Christians are a departure or apostacy from the one church of Christ.

2. The "one Spirit" is the one Holy Spirit, "the Spirit of truth," "the Comforter," whom the Father sent in the name of Christ (John 14:16, 17, 26). The apostle, in speaking of the various "gifts" of the Spirit as the miraculous manifestations in the apostolic age, says: "But all these worketh the one and

the same Spirit, dividing to each one severally even as he will" (1 Cor. 12:11). The one Spirit dwells in and animates the one body. The church of Christ, as "the house of God," is builded together in Christ "for a habitation of God in the Spirit" (Eph. 2:22). Paul says: "Know ye not that ye are a temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" (1 Cor. 3:16). The Holy Spirit dwells in all the true followers of the Christ, which is plainly set forth in this declaration: "But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwelleth in you, he that raised up Christ Jesus from the dead shall quicken also your mortal bodies through his Spirit that dwelleth in you" (Rom. 8:11). "By faith," and through the Word of Truth, the Holy Spirit dwells in the Christian, to sanctify, strengthen and comfort him. The special mission of the one Spirit to the world is to convict and convert, or turn, sinners to the Christ through the truth, or through the preached gospel which is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believes it.

3. The "one hope" is "the one hope of your calling." This "calling" is the holy occupation or profession of the Christian. In this holy vocation the Christian is prompted and urged forward by the "one hope." Hope is something not seen. Paul



says: "But hope that is seen is not hope; for who hopeth for that which he seeth?" (Rom. 8:24). Hope, which has sole reference to the future, has in it two elements; namely, the desire for something good, the expectation of receiving something good. Hope, which has in it the elements of desire and expectation, is always based upon faith in something; this is specially true in reference to the Christian's hope. Faith in the Word of God, especially in its promises, always stands under the hope of the Christian. The Common Version says: "Now faith is the *substance* of things hoped for" (Heb. 11:1). "Substance" comes from *sub*, under, and *starre*, to stand; then "substance" means, literally, to *stand under*, or that which stands under anything. If the Common Version is correct, then the idea is this: "Now, faith *stands under* the things hoped for." But let this be as it may, faith in the promises of God always stands under the things hoped for by the Christian. But what is the "one hope" of the Christian? The greatest desire of the Christian is eternal life and his greatest expectation is the glorious expectation of receiving this eternal life. Therefore, the "one hope" is the hope of immortality, the hope of eternal life. This is the great promise made by God to the faithful Christian. Paul says:

"In hope of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, promised before times eternal" (Tit. 1:2).

4. The "one Lord" is the one Lord Jesus Christ, the head of the "one body," the church, and who is its sole lawgiver and supreme ruler. The one Lord is Lord of lords and King of kings. God has exalted Jesus to be both Lord and Christ, who is Lord over all forever more! Peter said on the day of Pentecost: "Let all the house of Israel therefore know assuredly, that God hath made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom ye crucified" (Acts 2:36). Paul says: "To us there is one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we unto him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, through whom are all things, and we through him" (1 Cor. 8:6). The Lordship of Jesus is a matter of supreme importance, as seen in this bold declaration of Scripture: "All things have been created through him, and unto him; and he is before all things; and in him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the church; who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the pre-eminence" (Col. 1:17, 18). The one Lord is the sole Lord of the soul and conscience. To him only all owe allegiance in all things. Hence, the all-important question is not, What does man or some church or some creed

say? but, What does the Lord Jesus Christ say or command?

5. The "one faith" is faith in the "one Lord." The "one faith" is not faith in some theory of conversion, or some theory of the work of the Holy Spirit, or some theory of the atonement, or some theory of inspiration, or any theory. But the one faith is the faith of the whole heart in the divine Person, the Lord Jesus Christ. This "one faith" is always an active, living and obedient faith. With the apostles there is no such an idea as "*kinds*" of faith. There may be different objects of faith, but not kinds of faith, "for all faith is one." There are *degrees* in faith; such as "little faith," "weak faith" and "great faith," but not kinds of faith. When one looks at a red object, and then looks at a green object, the act of seeing is the same; it is not *red* seeing when he looks at the red object, neither is it *green* seeing when he looks at the green object. The difference here is not in *kinds* of seeing, but in the *objects* seen. To smell a fragrant flower and then smell a putrid carcass are not two kinds of smelling; the act of smelling is the same, but the difference is in the objects smelled. So, then, there may be different objects of faith, but not kinds of faith. All this preaching about "evangelical faith." "his-

torical faith," "saving faith" and "justifying faith," as *kinds* of faith, is sectarian jargon born of the apostacy from apostolic Christianity. The effects of faith always grow out of the *thing believed*, or the *object* in which one believes, and not in "kinds" of faith as taught by many of the denominations. When Jacob believed that his son Joseph was *dead*, and afterwards believed that he was *alive*, the effects of his faith were quite different, as that of grief and joy. It was not one kind of faith that produced the grief and another kind that produced the joy; the faith itself was the same in reference to Joseph's supposed death and in his being alive; but the two different effects in the mind of Jacob grew out of the thing he believed concerning Joseph. The "one faith" in the Christ brings joy and salvation to the unsaved, because it is faith in the *one Saviour* and not because it is some particular kind of faith.

6. The "one baptism" does not mean there is "one water baptism" and "one Holy Spirit baptism," as modern denominationalism teaches; but the Scripture says, "*One baptism*," without any such distinction as one baptism of a certain kind and one baptism of another kind. The "one baptism" is certainly the baptism commanded by the "one Lord" in the apostolic commission, and practiced, or administered,

by the apostles. The only baptism ever *commanded* by the Christ or *administered* by the apostles is the baptism "*in water*," not "*with water*," as it reads in the Common Version, but *in water*, as it reads in the Revised Version Americanized. No Biblical student can call in question the fact *that the baptism commanded by the Christ is the baptism "in water."* This is put with emphasis here because it is an unquestionable fact. The baptism "*in the Holy Spirit*" was a *promise*, administered solely by the Christ, and nowhere commanded in all the New Testament. Therefore, the "*one baptism*" is the baptism "*in water*." In the apostolic age, and years afterward, there was no question or argument by any one as to what is baptism, for all knew just what it is. Some of the very first departures from apostolic teaching and practice began in the perversions of the ordinance of baptism. In answering the question, What is the baptism "*in water*"? it is proposed here to let some eminent scholars and theologians who have practiced affusion for baptism, answer this important question, as follows:

1. *Beza, the great Reformer*, says: "To be baptized in water, signifies no other than to be immersed in water; which is the external ceremony of baptism."—*Annotations in Acts 19:3*, p. 488.

2. *Martin Luther* says: "The term 'baptism' is a Greek word; it may be rendered into Latin by *mersio*: when we immerse anything in water, that it may be entirely covered with water. And though that custom be quite abolished among the generality (for neither do they entirely dip children, but only sprinkle them with a little water), nevertheless they ought to be wholly immersed, and immediately to be drawn out again, for the etymology of the word seems to require it."—*Opera*, Tom. I., p. 72.

3. *John Calvin* says: "But whether the person who is baptized be wholly immersed, and whether thrice or once, or whether water be only poured or sprinkled upon him is of no importance; churches ought to be left at liberty to act according to the difference of countries. The very word 'baptize' signifies to immerse, and it is certain that immersion was the practice of the ancient church."—*Calvin's Institutes*, Vol. II., p. 491, published in 1841, by the Presbyterian Board of Publication, Philadelphia, Pa.

4. *Mosheim, the church historian*, says: "The sacrament of baptism was administered in this century [the first century] without the public assemblies, in places appointed and prepared for that purpose, and was performed by an immersion of the

whole body in the baptismal font.”—*Ecclesiastical History*, Vol. I., p. 46.

5. *Schaff, the church historian*, says: “The usual form of baptism was immersion. This is inferred from the original meaning of the Greek *baptizein* and *baptismos*; from the analogy of John’s baptism in the Jordan; from the apostles’ comparison of the sacred rite with the miraculous passage of the Red Sea, with the escape of the ark from the flood, with a cleansing and refreshing bath, and with burial and resurrection; finally, from the general custom of the ancient church, which [immersion] prevails in the East to this day.”—*History of the Christian Church*, Vol. I., p. 468.

6. *Conybeare and Howson, of the Church of England*, say: “It is needless to add that baptism was (unless in exceptional cases) administered by immersion, the convert being plunged beneath the surface of the water to represent his death to the life of sin, and then raised from this momentary burial to represent his resurrection to the life of righteousness. It must be a subject of regret that the general discontinuance of this original form of baptism (though perhaps necessary in our northern climate) has rendered obscure to popular apprehen-



sion some very important passages of Scripture.”  
—*Life and Epistles of Paul*, Vol. I., p. 518.

According to the testimony of these eminent scholars and theologians of the affusionist school, the “one baptism” *in water* means an immersion in water. Therefore the “one baptism” *in water* commanded by the one Lord, is the immersion in water of a proper subject “into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.”

7. The “one God and Father of all” is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, “the Father of spirits,” “our Father who art in heaven.” Jesus, the one Lord, is the full revelation of the one Father of all to the children of men. In the Christ the world may behold the Father of all. The Christ came from the Father to the world to tell man that God is his Father, “the Father of all, who is over all, and through all, and in all.” Out of the fatherhood of God comes the blessed thought, the brotherhood of man! The fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man are two vital thoughts to be found only and first in the religion of Christ.

In the foregoing seven units—the “one body,” the “one Spirit,” the “one hope,” the “one Lord,” the “one faith,” the “one baptism,” the “one God and Father of all”—we have “the unity of the Spirit,”



the original unity of the Apostolic Church. Wherever these seven units are to be found, there only is found the oneness in faith and doctrine, the oneness in nature, character, purpose and work, the primitive oneness of the body of Christ. The unity of the Apostolic Church, the oneness of the body of Christ, is organic just as far as it is expressed in the organization of the local church, or churches of Christ, and expressed in fraternal fellowship and co-operation in every good word and work. This appears to be all the organic unity, or union, taught in the New Testament.



## CHAPTER VII.

### WHAT THE PLEA DOES MEAN.

[CONTINUED.]

5th. The Plea to Restore the Apostolic Church means *the restoration* of the apostolic evangelism.

By apostolic evangelism is meant the preaching of the apostles in turning sinners to the Christ, teaching the baptized and establishing churches of Christ. What is now needed, and always needed, is to preach just what the apostles preached, and tell sinners what they must do to be saved, just what the apostles told them to do. What the Christ commanded the apostles to preach and teach is contained in the apostolic commission. Hence, this apostolic commission needs to be carefully studied. The commission that Christ gave to his apostles, as recorded by the four inspired writers, is as follows:

1. "Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you: and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world" (Matt. 28: 19, 20).

2. "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to the whole creation. He that believeth and

is baptized shall be saved; but he that disbelieveth shall be condemned" (Mark 16:15, 16).

3. "Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer, and rise again from the dead the third day; and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name unto all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem. Ye are witnesses of these things. And behold, I send forth the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city, until ye be clothed with power from on high" (Luke 24:46-49).

4. "Peace be unto you: as the Father hath sent me, even so send I you. And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Spirit: whose soever sins ye forgive, they are forgiven unto them; whose soever ye retain, they are retained" (John 20:21-23).

From this apostolic commission it is learned that the apostles preached "the gospel," preached the Christ, preached the Word; and that they preached "repentance and remission of sins" in the name of the Christ unto all the nations. In doing this preaching they made disciples or penitent believers; and when they made penitent believers they baptized them, and when the penitent believers were baptized they were "saved" or received "remission of sins." The baptized penitent believers were then taught to

observe all things whatsoever commanded by the Christ. In this apostolic commission is to be found the apostolic rule of conversion to the Christ, as follows: (1) Preaching the gospel; (2) faith, or belief of the gospel; (3) repentance; (4) baptism of the penitent believers; (5) salvation, or remission of sins. In this apostolic rule of conversion, the following are the gospel conditions, or terms, of salvation or remission of sins: (1) *Faith*; (2) *repentance*; (3) *baptism*. Of course the faith was the faith of the whole heart in the Christ, and a confession of the same; the repentance was a real sorrow for sin, and a turning away from sin; and the baptism was an embodiment of this faith, and repentance in humble submission to the authority of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. When the apostles made known these terms of remission of sins in preaching the gospel, in that sense only did they forgive sins; and when they did not disclose the terms of forgiveness, or withheld them, in that sense only they retained sins. This is, evidently, what Christ meant by the words: "Whosoever sins ye forgive, they are forgiven unto them; and whosesoever sins ye retain, they are retained."

Much of the preaching of modern denominations is wholly unlike the plain preaching of the

apostles. To preach just what the apostles preached, and tell sinners what they must do to be saved, just what the apostles told them to do, would break up some modern denominational revivals. Years ago the lamented George E. Flower, in a denominational revival at Evansville, Ind., attempted to read, without note or comment, just what the apostles told sinners to do to be saved, and he was called down and not permitted to read the simple Word of God. Bro. Flower was even accused of trying to break up the "union (?) revival" by wanting to read the apostle's answer to the question, "What must I do to be saved?" without note or comment. Even the great evangelist Moody, years since, in Cincinnati, O., would not permit a Christian preacher to read, without note or comment, the simple language of the apostles in telling sinners what they must do to be saved.

The apostles preached the gospel to the people; they then told the sinner to believe the gospel, or believe in the Christ, repent of his sins and be baptized, and he should be saved or receive the remission of sins. In all the cases of conversion, specially mentioned in Acts of Apostles, it is plainly stated that all persons, who believed in Christ and repented, were baptized; and thus they converted or turned

to the Christ. In every particular instance of conversion, while faith or repentance may not be directly mentioned, but implied, baptism is always mentioned without a single exception. This certainly means something which has been greatly overlooked by some denominational evangelists. Of the three thousand converted on the day of Pentecost, it is said of them: "They then that received his word *were baptized*" (Acts 2:41). Of the conversion of the Samaritans, it is said: "But when they believed Philip preaching good tidings concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they *were baptized*, both men and women" (Acts 8:12). It is said of the conversion of the eunuch: "And they both went down into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he *baptized him*" (Acts 8:38). The last thing said in reference to Saul's conversion, is this: "And he arose and *was baptized*" (Acts 9:18). In the conversion of Cornelius and his house, it is said: "And he commanded them *to be baptized* in the name of Jesus Christ" (Acts 10:48). In speaking of the conversion of Lydia, the inspired writer says: "And when she *was baptized*, and her household, she besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house and abide there" (Acts 16:15). Of the

conversion of the jailer it is stated: "And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and *was baptized*, he and all his, immediately" (Acts 16:33). The brief mention of the conversion of the Corinthians is given in these words: "And many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and *were baptized*" (Acts 18:8).

In an examination of the foregoing eight examples of conversion to Christ, specially mentioned in Acts of Apostles, it will be seen that the apostles simply preached the gospel and told sinners to believe in Christ, repent and be baptized for the remission of sins, or to be saved, and they should receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. All persons thus converted to Christ, under the preaching of the apostles, thereby became simply disciples of Christ or Christians only; and these disciples of Christ were gathered into local congregations, called "churches of Christ." The apostles taught these disciples, organized into local churches of Christ, to diligently observe all things whatsoever commanded by the Christ; and these disciples "continued stedfastly in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and the prayers" (Acts 2:42).

Christ commanded his apostles to tarry in the city of Jerusalem until they should receive the



promise of the Father, and thus be clothed with power from on high, before they began to make disciples of the nations. The apostles, as they were instructed by the Christ and specially endowed by the Holy Spirit, began their preaching on the day of Pentecost. Then to the day of Pentecost, "the beginning," we must go to hear the first gospel sermon preached under the reign of the exalted and glorified Christ. Here we have the beginning of the apostolic evangelism, which needs to be reproduced to-day in order to the restoration of apostolic Christianity in all its simplicity and fullness. This first gospel sermon preached on the day of Pentecost needs to be closely studied and *re-studied*. It is of such vast importance that it is here reproduced according to the most approved translation. The present writer is responsible for the analysis and headings.

#### THE FIRST GOSPEL SERMON.

*Theme.—Jesus Christ and Salvation Through Him.*

##### INTRODUCTION.

1. *The occasion of the sermon.* "And when the day of Pentecost was now come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly there came from

heaven a sound as of the rushing of a mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting."

2. *Preparation of the preacher.* "And there appeared unto them tongues parting asunder, like as fire; and it sat upon each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance."

3. *Persons addressed.* "Now there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, from every nation under heaven. And when this sound was heard, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speaking in his own language."

4. *Attention of the hearers obtained.* "And they were all amazed and marvelled, saying, Behold, are not all these who speak Galilæans? And how hear we, every man in our own language, wherein we were born? Parthians and Medes and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, in Judæa and Cappadocia, in Pontus and Asia, in Phrygia and Pamphylia, in Egypt and the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and sojourners from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabians, we do hear them speaking in our tongues the mighty works of God. And they were all amazed, and were perplexed, saying one to an-

other, What meaneth this? But others mocking said, They are filled with new wine."

THE SERMON AS PREACHED BY PETER.

I. A FALSE CHARGE REFUTED.

1. *The hour of the day against the charge.* "But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and spake forth unto them, saying, Ye men of Judæa, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and give ear unto my words. For these are not drunken, as ye suppose; seeing it is but the third hour of the day."

2. *An appeal to the prophet to refute the charge.* "But this is that which hath been spoken by the prophet Joel;

And it shall be in the last days, saith God,  
I will pour forth of my Spirit upon all flesh:  
And your sons and your daughters shall prophesy,  
And your young men shall see visions,  
And your old men shall dream dreams:  
Yea, and on my servants and on my handmaidens  
in those days  
Will I pour forth of my Spirit; and they shall  
prophesy.  
And I will shew wonders in the heaven above,  
And signs on the earth beneath;

Blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke :  
The sun shall be turned into darkness,  
And the moon into blood,  
Before the day of the Lord come,  
That great and notable day :  
And it shall be, that whosoever shall call on  
the name of the Lord shall be saved."

## II. JESUS OF NAZARETH INTRODUCED.

1. *Character, death and resurrection.* "Ye men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God unto you by mighty works and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, even as ye yourselves know; him, being delivered up by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye by the hand of lawless men did crucify and slay; whom God raised up, having loosed the pangs of death; because it was not possible that he should be holden of it."

2. *An appeal to David concerning Jesus.* "For David saith concerning him.

I beheld the Lord always before my face;  
For he is on my right hand, that I should not be  
moved :  
Therefore my heart was glad, and my tongue re-  
joiced ;

Moreover my flesh also shall dwell in hope :  
Because thou wilt not leave my soul in Hades,  
Neither wilt thou give thy Holy One to see corruption.

Thou madest known unto me the ways of life ;  
Thou shalt make me full of gladness with thy countenance."

3. *David as a prophet foretold the resurrection of Jesus.* "Brethren, I may say unto you freely of the patriarch David, that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us unto this day. Being therefore a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins he would set one upon his throne ; he foreseeing this, spake of the resurrection of the Christ, that neither was he left in Hades, nor did his flesh see corruption."

### III. THE RESURRECTION AND EXALTATION OF JESUS.

1. *Living witnesses of the resurrection.* "This Jesus did God raise up, whereof we all [apostles] are witnesses."

2. *Holy Spirit poured forth as proof of the exaltation of Jesus.* "Being therefore by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he hath poured forth this, which ye see and hear."

3. *The exaltation of Jesus proved by David.* "For David ascended not into the heaven; but he saith himself:

The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand,  
Till I make thine enemies the footstool of thy feet."

#### IV. THE GRAND CONCLUSION.

1. *Jesus made both Lord and Christ.* "Let all the house of Israel therefore know assuredly, that God hath made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom ye crucified."

2. *The effect and the question asked.* "Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and the rest of the apostles, Brethren, what shall we do?"

3. *The answer to the great question.* "And Peter said unto them, Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For to you is the promise, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call unto him."

4. *Words of exhortation.* "And with many other words he testified, and exhorted them, saying, Save yourselves from this crooked generation."

*Final Result of the Sermon.*—"They then that received his word were baptized; and there were added unto them in that day about three thousand souls. And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and the prayers" (Acts 2:1-42).

In making a review of the foregoing apostolic sermon, the first gospel sermon, the following points are worthy of special emphasis: First, the Christ was preached, or the gospel was preached in its simplicity and fullness. Second, sinners heard the preaching attested by divine power, and believed it from the very fact that what they heard convicted them, or "pricked" them in the heart. Third, these sinners who were pricked in the heart, who thus believed what was preached, were commanded to repent and be baptized "unto the remission of sins," with the promise that they should "receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." Fourth, these sinners were convicted, or pricked in the heart, and turned to Christ, by the Holy Spirit in the apostles *through* what was preached to them. In other words, these sinners, on the day of Pentecost, were convicted and converted by the Holy Spirit *through* the preaching of Peter or the apostles. Fifth, the rule of conversion and the gospel conditions of salva-

tion, or remission of sins, as set forth in the apostolic commission, are given a practical application. In all this we have the apostolic evangelism which must be reproduced to-day in order to restore the original Apostolic Church.



## CHAPTER VIII.

### WHAT THE PLEA DOES MEAN.

[CONCLUDED.]

6th. The Plea to Restore the Apostolic Church means *the restoration* of the New Testament names of the followers of Christ.

It has been said there is nothing in a name; that "a rose by any other name will smell just as sweet." This is mere sentiment and not logic nor truth. There is something in a name. Who would not rather wear the name of President William McKinley than the name of his despised assassin?

Bible names mean something. They are often significant of the work or mission of the person so named, or of some important incident or event in the life of the person. The angel said to Joseph in reference to Mary's unborn infant: "And she shall bring forth a son; and thou shalt call his name JESUS; for he shall save his people from their sins" (Matt. 1:21). The name Jesus means a *Saviour*, the Saviour who saves from sin. Paul says of the wonderful name Jesus: "Wherefore also God highly exalted him, and gave unto him the name which is above every name; that in the name of Jesus every

knee should bow, of things in heaven and things on earth and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Phil. 2:9-11). When Abram was to become the father of many nations he was given the name of *Abraham*, which name was significant of that fact, as is learned from these words: "Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be called Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee" (Gen. 17:5).

In the New Testament, the followers of the Christ are designated by several names, which names are significant of their character, their relation to one another and to their Lord. These New Testament names by which the followers of Jesus are called or designated, are these: "disciples," "brethren," "believers," "saints," "Christians." All these names or designations are to be accepted and worn by all the followers of the Christ. No one follower of the Christ, or any number of followers, is to monopolize any one of these names, or all of them. All these names belong to all the children of God, "the Father of all." Any one person, or any number of persons, who claims and wears, in an exclusive sense, these New Testament names given to all the children

of God, sectarianizes these names and perverts their Scripture meaning. A brief study of each one of the New Testament names, or designations, of the followers of the Christ, will be profitable to those who desire to know and do the will of the Master in all things.

1. "DISCIPLES."—The followers of Jesus, during his personal ministry, were almost exclusively called "disciples," "the disciples," or "his disciples," or "my disciples." In Acts of Apostles, the expression "the disciples" occurs some twenty times, showing that this was indeed the most common designation of the primitive followers of our Lord. The word "disciples" means "learners" or "pupils" of some teacher or leader of thought. Hence, "disciples" of Christ mean learners or pupils of the Christ. The designation indicates the relation that exists between Jesus and his followers as that of teacher and learners or pupils. The Christ is the great Teacher come from God, and his followers are his learners or pupils, and therefore they are appropriately called "disciples," "the disciples of Christ."

2. BRETHREN.—The primitive disciples of Jesus were called or designated "brethren." "the brethren." The Christ said to his disciples: "But be not ye called Rabbi; for one is your teacher, and all ye are

brethren" (Matt. 23:8). Several times Jesus speaks of his disciples as "my brethren." The expression "the brethren" occurs for the first time in John 21:23, in these words: "This saying therefore went forth among the brethren," etc. The expression, "the brethren," occurs in Acts of Apostles and in the Epistles, more than one hundred times, to designate the disciples of the Christ. The words, "the brethren," indicate that tender and endearing relation which exists between the individual followers of Jesus—they are brethren, Christ is an elder Brother, and God is their Father. The apostles in their writings, when expressing great tenderness and affection toward their fellow disciples, always employed the fraternal expression, "the brethren." How sweet and tender is the expression, "my brethren," in the message that the dear Lord gave to the women on the morning of the resurrection, when he said: "Go tell *my brethren* that they depart into Galilee, and there shall they see me" (Matt. 28:10)! "My brethren," "the brethren" of the blessed Christ!

3 "BELIEVERS.—Paul says to Timothy: "Be thou an example to them that believe" (1 Tim. 4:12). The Common Version says: "But be thou an example of *the believers*." In the Epistles, the disciples of the Christ are often referred to as "them that

believe," or "those that believe," meaning "the believers." In Christianity its adherents are pre-eminently *the believers*, persons of unflinching belief or faith in the Christ, their one Lord and Saviour; for they indeed "walk by faith" and "live in faith." Paul says: "For we walk by faith, not by sight" (2 Cor. 5: 7). The apostle further says: "I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I that live, but Christ liveth in me: and that life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith which is in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself up for me" (Gal. 2: 20). Again, the apostle says: "And whatsoever is not of faith is sin" (Rom. 14: 23). The whole religion of the Christ belongs to the realm of faith, or belief. Every act of worship and service acceptable to the Christ is an expression of faith or belief in the Christ. The significant ordinance of baptism is an expression, or embodiment, of the soul's faith, unfeigned faith, in Jesus Christ, who commanded the ordinance. Therefore, the followers of the Christ are very properly designated "the believers."

4. SAINTS.—The word "saints" means persons who are "holy, set apart or separate." In the Old Testament, the ancient people of God are called "saints" more than forty times. In the New Testa-

ment, the followers of the Christ are designated by the word "saints" more than sixty times. Paul addresses the brethren at Rome thus: "To all that are in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints" (Rom. 1:7). The words "to be" have no representation in the Greek, and they should not appear in the translation. The correct translation reads thus: "To all that are in Rome, beloved of God, *called* saints." The saints of the New Testament are "*the holy*." Moses E. Lard, throughout his "Commentary on Romans," translates the Greek of which we have the word "saints" by the words "the holy." In this translation, the commentator is certainly correct. Of all the names by which Jesus' followers are designated, the name "saints" is, perhaps, the most expressive of character. The followers of Jesus are to be in heart and life *holy*, "the holy," Godlike and Christlike; and therefore they are very appropriately called "the holy," "the saints." All living disciples of the Christ are saints, not just a few dead ones. The divine injunction comes to all as expressed in these words: "But like as he who called you is holy, be ye yourselves also holy in all manner of living; because it is written, Ye shall be holy; for I am holy" (1 Pet. 1:15). All disciples of Jesus are to be "*holy* brethren, partakers of a heavenly calling" (Heb. 3:1).

5. "CHRISTIANS."—The word "Christians," in the plural form, occurs only once, and in the singular form twice, in the New Testament. The word occurs for the first time in this noted passage: "And it came to pass, that even for a whole year they [Barnabas and Saul, or Paul] were gathered together with the church, and taught much people; and the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch" (Acts 11: 26). It is claimed by some that the disciples were called Christians by Barnabas and Paul; and therefore this name was given by divine direction or inspiration. The present writer once accepted this view, but after more careful investigation he has abandoned it altogether. The text simply states the fact "that the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch." without saying one word as to who did this; that is, who called the disciples Christians. It is the firm conviction of the present writer that the disciples were called Christians in Antioch by the outside heathen Antiochians, who did this in derision of the disciples. In proof of this, careful attention is invited to the following:

1st. The followers of Jesus are called or designated as "the disciples," "the brethren," "the believers" or "the saints," by inspiration ten or fifteen years before there is any mention, at all, of the name



“Christian” or “Christians”; and when the name is mentioned for the first time it is given in a heathen Gentile city. 2d. Beginning with the eleventh chapter of Acts, it is found in the remaining ~~seventeen~~ chapters that the followers of Jesus are called or designated as “the saints” one time, “the disciples” fourteen times, and “the brethren” twenty-two times; and not one time are they called or designated “Christians.” This certainly ought to mean something in this investigation. 3d. Barring the controverted passage, Acts 11:26, nowhere in all the New Testament does any apostle or inspired writer ever call or designate the followers of Jesus by the name of “Christians.” This is an absolute fact which can not be set aside, and ought to have some weight with those who are seeking the truth in reference to the origin of the name “Christian” or “Christians.” 4th. Barnabas and Paul “taught much people” in Antioch; they preached to the people the Christ, and many believed in the Christ and obeyed the Christ, thus becoming the followers of the Christ. The name of the Christ was the one name heard everywhere until, perhaps, it began to be hawked on the streets by the unbelieving Antiochians, who, when they saw that many of their number had become believers in the Christ, called them, in derision of the Christ,



*Christ-ians* or Christians, thus nicknaming them after the Christ. This appears to be the true origin of the name "Christians" in Antioch; and all this talk about the name "Christian" being the "new name" spoken of by the Old Testament prophet, is wholly fantastic.

The first time the word "Christian," in the singular form, appears in the New Testament, is found in this passage: "And Agrippa said unto Paul, With but little persuasion thou wouldst fain make me a Christian. And Paul said, I would to God, that whether with little or with much, not thou only, but also all that hear me this day, might become such as I am, except these bonds" (Acts 26:28, 29). King Agrippa, a Roman officer, evidently employs the word "Christian" in the same sense that the heathen Antiochians used it. In fact, Agrippa's language to Paul appears to be rather ridicule, or a fine piece of sarcasm! Paul, in reply, does not use the word "Christian" at all, nor does he appear to sanction the use of the word; for, had he done so, something like this would have been his reply: "I would to God that you and all that hear me this day might become Christians." But Paul says these words: "I would to God . . . all that hear me this day, *might become such as I am*, except these bonds."

The second and last occurrence of the word "Christian," in the singular form, is found in this text: "For let none of you suffer as a murderer, or a thief, or an evil-doer, or as a meddler in other men's matters; but if a man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God in this name" (1 Pet. 4: 15, 16). When Peter wrote these words it appears that the disciples of Jesus were then being much persecuted by their heathen opposers. The apostle writes to the brethren: "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial among you, which cometh upon you to prove you" (1 Pet. 4: 12). It is learned from profane history that when the heathens persecuted the disciples of Jesus they always designated them by the name "Christians," using the name in its heathen derisive sense. These heathen persecutors asked the one question, "Are you a Christian?" and if the question was answered in the affirmative, then the torture or persecution was inflicted. So, then, the apostle Peter appears to have employed the name "Christian" as it was commonly used by the heathen persecutors. But the apostle does say: "But let him *glorify God in this name*" (Christian). From these words, perhaps, it ought to be correctly inferred, that the apostle Peter does sanction or approve of the name "Christian," and

that the disciples of Jesus may appropriately be called "Christians," though the name itself is of heathen origin, but appropriated by the early disciples of Jesus. In this sense only can it be claimed that this name "Christian," or "Christians," is one of the New Testament names of the followers of the Christ.

While the New Testament names of the followers of Jesus, as individuals, are "disciples," "brethren," "believers," "saints," "Christians," they are, as local communities, and in the aggregate, designated by other names. As local communities, or congregations, the disciples of Jesus are designated, or called, "churches of God," "churches of Christ," and when a single local congregation is referred to, it is simply called "the church," or "the church of God," at that place. Paul, in writing to Philemon, speaks of "*the church in thy house*" (Philem. 2); and, in writing to brethren at Corinth, he designates them as "*the Church of God that is at Corinth*" (1 Cor. 1:2). In the aggregate, taking in all the followers of Jesus, they are designated, or called, in the New Testament, "*the church*," "*the church of God*," "*the body of Christ*," and by implication, "*the church of Christ*," since Christ says, "I will build *my church*," which certainly means "*the church of Christ*." These, then, are the New Testament names, or designations, of the

followers of the Christ in what may be called church relation.

All such expressions as "our church," "your church," "Baptist Church," "Methodist Church," "Presbyterian Church," "Catholic Church," and so on, are wholly sectarian expressions, subversive of the New Testament names, or designations, of the followers of the Christ. The expression, "*the* Christian Church," especially, when used to include only a part of the followers of the Christ, is just as sectarian as the expression, "the Baptist Church," or "the Catholic Church." The expression, "the Christian Church," is nowhere found in all the New Testament; the expression is like the expression, "the Apostolic Church," and is used by commentators and other writers to designate, or refer to, that original institution described in the New Testament as "the church of God," or "the body of Christ."

Therefore, those who are making The Plea to Restore the Apostolic Church are *not* "the Christian Church," though some loose writers and thinkers speak of them as such. Those who are making The Plea to Restore the Apostolic Church, in the aggregate, are not *a* church, nor *the* church, neither are they a denomination or a sect. Those who make this incomparable Plea, are, as individuals, simply "dis-

ciples of Christ," "brethren," "believers," "saints," "Christians"; and, in church relations, they are simply "churches of God," "churches of Christ," no more nor less. They are as a people pleading earnestly for *the restoration* of original apostolic Christianity, in all things, where there has been departure from "the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints." Hence, their Plea also means *the restoration of the* New Testament names of the followers of the Christ.



## CHAPTER IX.

### THE RESULTS TO BE ACCOMPLISHED BY THE PLEA.

The results to be accomplished by The Plea to Restore the Apostolic Church are many and great, in view of the present divided state of Christendom with its many conflicting dogmas and doctrines of men and human inventions in religion. Some of these results will now be pointed out for careful inspection.

1st. The original church of Christ, in its faith, doctrine, organization, government, unity, worship, terms of fellowship, terms of admission, will be fully restored or reproduced in the world among all Christians. In every community where there are Christians, these Christians will be, in their organized capacity, simply the church of Christ in that community, and if the community demands one or more organizations, they will be simply "the churches of Christ" of that community or city, as the case may be. The religious forces of a given community or city will not be weakened or divided up into rival sects, or denominations, making war on each other. A little town of three hundred inhabitants will not be "*churched*" to death by six or seven denominational churches, where there is not more than enough room

for one local church of Christ, which can fully meet all the religious wants of the community. What a blessing the restoration of the Apostolic Church would be in every village, town and city throughout all the land!

2d. All the professed followers of the Christ will be just common disciples of the Lord, or Christians only, just what they were in the days of the apostles. They will be just common Christians, without any denominational or sectarian distinctions, as Baptists, Methodists, Presbyterians, Episcopalians or Catholics. There will be no denominational or sectarian label put on any of the Lord's sheep of the one common fold. Neither will there be any one engaged in building up denominational fences to separate the sheep of the Lord into little sectarian folds, but all the sheep will herd together, and be led by the great Shepherd of the sheep into all green pastures, where they can eat together, and no one dare molest them or make them afraid. No sectarian preacher will stand over the Lord's Supper and say this Christian shall partake or that Christian shall not partake; but all Christians will sit down together, and, in holy communion with the blessed Christ, partake of the emblems of the broken body and shed blood of their dear Lord, in sweet and loving remembrance of him.



3d. All Christians will belong to the church of Christ only, or the body of Christ only, and not at the same time belong to something else in the way of a modern denominational or sectarian church. One of the great sins of modern denominationalism is, that it has a person to be something else other than simply being a Christian, and belonging, religiously, to something else other than the church of Christ; and this belonging to something else other than the church of Christ is to belong to some denomination or sect. The church of Christ, or body of Christ, is just big enough to contain all Christians, and there is no need whatever for Christians to belong to anything else; and if the Lord had intended for them to belong to anything else other than his church, he would have said so in his holy Word. Therefore, all denominational churches are wholly unnecessary, and are contrary to the will of the one great Head of the church. In fact, they are sinful before the Lord and are a subversion of divine law.

4th. All Christians will believe the one divine creed, have the one and same confession of faith, and be governed by the one and same divine rule of faith and practice. The one divine creed, the summary of "the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints," which is the simple and yet all-comprehen-

sive proposition, *Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God*, will be accepted by all, and all human creeds will be rejected. There will be no General Assemblies or great Conventions to spend days and months in heated discussion on "creed revision." All Christians will have the one simple divine confession of faith, which is an oral confession of personal faith, the faith of the whole heart in the divine person, Jesus the Christ, the Son of God. All Christians will have and accept only the Word of God as their one rule of all faith and practice, and at the same time rejecting all human rules or books of church discipline, as guides to direct them in faith, worship and practice.

5th. Among all Christians there will be just the "one body," "the body of Christ," the one church of Christ of which he alone is head, the supreme lawgiver and ruler. There will be to all the "one hope," the hope of immortality, the hope of eternal life, to cheer, comfort the heart and stimulate to all Christian activity. There will be the "one Spirit," the Holy Spirit, to dwell in the hearts of all Christians, to sanctify, to "help our infirmity," to strengthen "with power in the inward man," to convict and convert sinners to the Christ through the truth. There will be no controversies about the in-

dwelling of the Holy Spirit, or the operation of the Spirit in sanctification and conversion. There will be the "one Lord," not lord the pope, lord the bishop, lord the priest, lord the preacher, but the one Lord Jesus Christ, who is to be over all and in all. There will be the "one faith," the faith in the "one Lord," and no more disputes or confusions about "kinds" of faith. There will be the "one baptism," the baptism "in water" of penitent believers, "into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." There will be no more debates about "the mode" of baptism. There will be indeed the "one God and Father of all, who is over all, and through all, and in all." The primitive unity of the Apostolic Church will be reproduced everywhere among all Christians, and all Christians will give "diligence to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."

6th. All the followers of the Christ will recognize and wear only the New Testament names of the children of God; they will be designated and known simply as "disciples," "brethren," "believers," "saints," "Christians." There will be no denominational or sectarian names to create and foster denominational divisions in the one body of Christ. The sect spirit will no longer be heard to say: I am

of Paul, I am of Apollos, I am of Cephas, I am of Christ (in a sectarian sense), or I am of Luther, Calvin, Wesley, Campbell, or any other human leader. Take away from the religious world of to-day all denominational or sectarian names, and the great mass of professed Christians would soon come together in a common faith and fellowship. Simply party names, or denominational names, have much to do in keeping up party or denominational distinctions. It is an absolute fact that the present divided religious world will never unite, or come into a common fellowship, while it keeps up its denominational names and party distinctions. The denominational divisions of professed Christians can never unite and all be Methodists, Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Lutherans, Baptists or Catholics; but all of them can unite and be one as Christians only, while they will ever remain separate in keeping up denominational names and distinctions.

7th. There will be union and co-operation of all the religious forces in missionary efforts, in educational work, in work of benevolence, in work of civic and all righteous reforms. What a power would be put forth in Home and Foreign Missions if all missionary forces were united and working harmoniously! If all missionary forces and means were

put together and united into one solid phalanx, how long would it take to evangelize the heathen world to the Christ? Vast amount of time and means could be saved to-day in foreign mission fields and home mission work, if all the missionary forces were united and working hand and heart together for Christ and humanity. Many of the little starving missions would soon become great centers of evangelization, if all the missionaries and the money were put together in preaching the gospel of the Christ. Denominational divisions among professed Christians are doing much to keep back the evangelization of the world to the Christ. What vast amount of time, money and expense could be saved in educational work if all religious forces and agencies were in harmonious co-operation! How many of the poor, the orphans, the widows, the unfortunate, would be neglected, if all the religious forces were united in work of benevolence? What untold good could be accomplished in all civic and righteous reforms of corrupt society, if all the religious forces were standing together in a solid front against all social evils!

8th. There will be the accomplishment of the great mission of the church of Christ. The great mission of the Christ to the world was to save it. John says: "For God sent not the Son into the  
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world to judge the world; but that the world should be saved through him" (John 3:17). The church of Christ is to do in a very important sense just what the Christ did when he came into the world. The Christ's great mission was to save a lost and ruined world. Therefore, the mission of the church of Christ is also to save the lost world. The church is the great moral and spiritual force in the world which is to lift it up and save it. The church is to do this in preaching the gospel of salvation to all the nations of the earth, and in bringing all the world to the one and only Saviour to be saved. The kingdoms of this world are to become the kingdoms of God and his Christ. The mission of the church is to bring about this glorious consummation. The church, in its present divided condition into sects and denominations, can never do this great work, or carry out its mission to the world. The only way by which the mission of the church to the world can be accomplished is the complete restoration of the Apostolic Church in all things.

9th. The earnest prayer which the Christ prayed for the oneness of all his disciples will be answered. Surely the Christ did not pray a prayer, and especially this one, which is never to be answered. Indeed, this great intercessory prayer of the Christ for

the oneness of all his disciples will most certainly be answered. It can not be otherwise, though it may not come just in the way, or be just what, many are looking for. Still, this prayer of the Christ must and will be answered. Before departure or apostacy came in the way of denominations and sects, all the followers of the Christ were one; and they can become one again by returning, in all things, to that original oneness. This can be done only by the complete restoration of the one original Apostolic Church, in faith, doctrine, practice and life. In the answer of the prayer of the Christ for the oneness of all his children, there will be Christian union, fellowship and love among all professed Christians everywhere. There will be no denominational strife or conflicting creeds to mar the peace and harmony of the children of God. The world will then believe that the Father sent the Son to save it. The oneness of the disciples of Jesus is absolutely essential to the conversion of the world to the Christ. Then will begin the true golden age in which peace on earth and good will toward men will universally prevail.

The foregoing are some of the great results to be accomplished by The Plea to Restore the Apostolic Church. These results are sufficient to make the earnest advocacy of the Plea an all-important



matter. In view of the many departures from "the faith," resulting in the present divided condition of the religious world, these results ought to be sufficient to enlist every true follower of Jesus in an earnest advocacy of *The Plea to Restore the Apostolic Church*. These results are sufficient to inspire a holy zeal and great courage in all those who are now making the Plea.



## CHAPTER X.

### THE PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF THE PLEA.

In the practical application of The Plea to Restore the Apostolic Church, there are some governing rules or principles to be observed. These all-important rules or principles are these:

1. *The all and alone sufficiency of the Word of God, especially the New Testament, as the complete and sole Guide in all religious faith and practice.*

2. *In all matters of faith and doctrine, "Where the Scriptures speak, we speak; where the Scriptures are silent, we are silent."*

3. *In all things of faith and doctrine, not in matters of opinion or methods of work or questions of expediency, there must be an express command of the Scriptures or an approved example or a necessary inference.*

4. *Nothing must be made a test of Christian fellowship, communion and co-operation but faith in Christ and obedience to him.*

With the preceding governing rules or principles as a guide, a practical application of The Plea to Restore the Apostolic Church can now be made. This will be done in the following supposed example:

In the town of Tarpley there are five distinct denominational churches, known as the Baptist Church, the Methodist Church, the Presbyterian Church, the Congregational Church, the Lutheran Church. These churches, for some time, have been fraternizing and co-operating in temperance work and civic reform of the town. In a conference of the ministers and leading brethren of these five churches it is unanimously agreed that a *union* meeting or revival shall be held, in which all the churches shall join in hand and heart. After much deliberation and prayer, it is further agreed that nothing distinctive of any particular denominational body or church shall be preached; that all the preaching shall be simply the preaching of the simple gospel of the Christ, or the preaching of just what the apostles preached when they turned people to the Christ. It is still further agreed that all persons who desire to become Christians, and manifest that desire by coming forward, shall be plainly instructed, just as the apostles instructed such persons, to believe with the whole heart in the Christ, sincerely repent of all sin, confess with the mouth the faith in the Christ, and obey him in baptism, baptism "in water," which baptism all the five churches accept as the baptism commanded by the Christ.

The union revival now begins with great interest, and a good feeling pervades all. Love and harmony are in the hearts of all the ministers and the brethren engaged in the union revival; and for the time being all denominationalism is forgotten, or held in abeyance. Night after night the good work goes on with the intense desire on the part of all to bring sinners to the Christ. The people are plainly taught to believe in the Christ with the whole heart, repent of their sins, confess the Christ and obey the Lord in baptism. The people thus interested respond by the scores; happily converted to the Christ, they rejoice in the promises of the gospel. The great union revival now draws to a close. One hundred persons converted to the Christ are the immediate results. All of these converts have truly believed in the Christ, have sincerely repented, have confessed the Christ, and have obeyed him in being baptized.

Now, then, what are these new converts, religiously, at the close of the union revival? Are they Baptists or Methodists or Presbyterians? No, not yet. To become Baptists, Methodists or Presbyterians, they will have *to join* the Baptist, Methodist or Presbyterian Church. Well, are they Congregationalists or Lutherans? Not at all, though they may become such by joining these respective denominations. But

as yet no denominational label can be put upon them, for the simple reason that they do not, as yet, belong to any denomination. Well, in reality, what are these one hundred converts at the close of the union revival? Why, they are just Christians, and Christians *only*. They have been taught to do just what the apostles taught people to do to become Christians, and they have willingly done all these things; then, of course, they are simply Christians. Who will dare say they are not Christians? Then, to what church do these converts, Christians only, now belong? Why, to the church of Christ only, which is composed of all true Christians. They really entered the church of Christ by becoming Christians; for whatever makes a person a Christian puts that person into the church of Christ. All are agreed that a person must "be born again" to become a Christian; and Jesus teaches us that a person must "be born again," "born of water and the Spirit," to enter into "the kingdom of God," the church of Christ (John 3: 5). Therefore, whatever makes a person a Christian necessarily puts that person into the kingdom of God, the church of Christ. Then, it will be accepted by all, that, at the close of the union revival, the one hundred converts are Christians only and belong to the church of Christ only. Now, this is just all that God would

have these new converts be and belong to. Does the Father in heaven require, in his Word, of any person to be more or less than to be a Christian, or to belong to anything more than to belong to the church of Christ?

Now, then, at the close of the union meeting, the one hundred converts conclude that, as they are Christians only, and already belong to the church of Christ only—just all God would have them be and belong to—they will not divide up and go into the different denominational churches in the town of Tarpley. They immediately assemble on the Lord's Day at some convenient place, for worship, praise, prayer, reading the Scriptures and exhortation. They partake of the emblems of the broken body and shed blood of the Lord in loving remembrance of him, having this right and exalted privilege by virtue of the fact that they are Christians, and thus they are all common priests unto God. They continue these Lord's Day meetings, taking the Word of the Lord as their sole rule of faith and practice, making faith in Christ, and obedience to him in all things, the only tests of Christian fellowship, communion and co-operation. In all matters of faith and doctrine, where the Word of God speaks, they speak, and where the Word of God is silent, they are silent;

or, in all matters of faith and teaching, they will have a "Thus saith the Lord" in an express command or an approved example or necessary inference. Then, as they continue the Lord's Day services, and thus grow in the divine life, they set apart certain ones of their number, who are apt to teach; to be leaders in the worship and work, such as elders or pastors or bishops, deacons and evangelists. Here, then, is a local community of Christians with its elders or pastors or bishops, deacons and evangelists, quietly meeting on the first day of every week, keeping house for the Lord and walking in all his appointments. Now, then, what are they? Are they a Baptist, Methodist, Presbyterian, Congregationalist or Lutheran Church? No, indeed; for they have refused to go into any of these denominational churches. Then, are they a denomination? Not a bit of it. They are just a local congregation, or local church of Christ, because they are Christians only, and belong to the church of Christ only.

The work of these one hundred new converts, or local church of Christ, begins to grow and spread abroad. These brethren, or Christians only, send some of their members, leaders in the work, and begin a similar work at Francisville by establishing a local church of Christ in that city. These two

churches of Christ now co-operate and begin the good work at Coratown, establishing a church of Christ in that community. On the good work of New Testament evangelism goes from town to town, from community to community, till more than twenty churches of Christ are established. All these churches of Christ heartily co-operate in sounding out the Word of the Lord in all the surrounding country. These Christians only go everywhere preaching the Word, building up simple churches of Christ; and, at the same time, inducing many of the "denominational Christians" to give up all denominationalism and become Christians only and belong to the church of Christ only.

In all these churches of Christ, beginning with the one hundred converts of the union revival, there is the one divine creed, the one divine confession of faith and the one divine rule of faith and practice. In all matters of faith and doctrine, where the Scriptures speak, they speak, and where the Scriptures are silent, they are silent. These churches of Christ make faith in Christ and obedience to him the only tests of Christian fellowship and co-operation. The individual members of these churches are "disciples of Christ," "believers," "brethren," "saints," "Christians," and in church relation they are simply "church-



es of Christ." In organization and government they have none but what is found in the organization and congregational government of the local congregation, or local church of Christ. In the work of evangelization, these churches of Christ preach the simple gospel of the Christ, or preach just what the apostles preached, and have people to do just what the apostles have people to do to be saved, to become Christians, to enter the church of Christ. They earnestly plead for the unity of all the professed followers of the Christ, because the primitive disciples of the Christ were one in Christ; and because "there is one body," "one Spirit," "one hope," "one Lord," "one faith," "one baptism," "one God and Father of all;" and because the dear Lord and Saviour earnestly prayed for the oneness of all his disciples just before he suffered on the cross.

In all this good work, as far as it goes, of the one hundred converts of the union revival, there is a restoration of primitive Christianity, and thus a practical application of *The Plea to Restore the Apostolic Church*. In this supposed example there is a complete illustration of the work of the fathers who inaugurated the Restoration Movement of the nineteenth century. Their children, who have grown to a great people of more than a million in numbers



in these United States, are, to-day, carrying forward the work of the fathers in making The Plea to Restore the Apostolic Church. This people, the children of the fathers, claim to be, as individuals, simply disciples of the Christ, or Christians only; and in their organized capacity, they claim to be churches of Christ only. In church organization and government they claim none other than that which the inspired apostles established in the organization and government of the local church of Christ. While they have missionary conventions and societies, wholly as co-operations of the churches, in doing mission work, they have no other "ecclesiastical" organization and government than that of the local church of Christ.



## CHAPTER XI.

### THE DANGERS CONFRONTING THE PLEA.

There are dangers confronting the Plea, or confronting those who make The Plea to Restore the Apostolic Church, which demand thoughtful attention. All movements in the way of any reform, and especially religious movements, are confronted, more or less, with dangers. If these dangers are not avoided, or met successfully, failure will be the result in the end. It is the part of wisdom to see ahead and know these dangers, and thus be fully prepared to successfully meet them. The dangers confronting those who make The Plea to Restore the Apostolic Church are here pointed out for most serious consideration.

1st. THE DANGER OF APOSTACY.—Ever since sin began in the world there has been a tendency on the part of erring man to apostacy, or to depart from the law of God. The apostacy of the human family was so great at one time as to cause God to destroy the world with a mighty flood, to the exception of the eight souls saved in Noah's ark. It was not very long after the flood till the human family began again to apostatize or depart from God. It ap-

pears that it was only the call of Abraham, and God's covenant relation with him, that saved the patriarchal world from universal idolatry. Even the posterity of Abraham, God's own chosen people who were in special covenant relation with him, were constantly going astray or departing from the law of Jehovah. The history of the Jews, God's covenanted people, after they reached the land of promise, is almost a history of repeated apostasies and reformations or restorations. The old prophets were continually calling the people to repentance and to a return to "the old paths" from whence they had departed. Early in the history of the primitive churches of Christ is to be found apostasy or departure, in many things, from "the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints." In fact, church history is largely a history of successive apostasies and reformations among the professed followers of the Christ.

In all these apostasies or departures from God, there are many lessons of warning to the people who are now laboring to restore apostolic Christianity, or to reproduce in all things the faith and doctrine of the inspired apostles, as given in the New Testament. The apostasy in the early churches of Christ began by degrees, and, perhaps, in what might be called *little things*; here a small deviation and there a slight

deflection from the ancient faith and order, culminating in a complete departure, in many things, from apostolic faith and practice. Apostasy is always slight and not very perceptible in the beginning, but by gradual growth it soon becomes great, and, if not checked, total. Here, then, let those who make The Plea to Restore the Apostolic Church take due warning in reference to the danger of apostasy, ever remembering that absolute safety lies only in unflinching loyalty to the Word of God in all things. Is not the disposition of preachers to wear ecclesiastical titles, such as "Rev." and "D. D.," and missionary conventions reaching out after the management and discipline of the churches, a tendency to an ecclesiasticism which means, in the end, a departure? A little warning at this point is needed.

2d. THE DANGER OF NARROWNESS.—Narrow, contracted ideas and notions in reference to any great work or reform, persisted in by those engaged in the work, always bring defeat and failure in the end. There must be an adequate and full conception of things, a large and just vision of principles in any great undertaking or work. Little men, men of narrow ideas, can never push any important movement to permanent success. Narrow ideas and narrow views of things have put many a deserved plea or

work into the ruts, never to be lifted out till advocates of enlarged ideas and views have taken hold. One of the difficulties the Christ had to contend with during his personal ministry was the narrow ideas and conceptions of his own disciples in reference to the nature of "the kingdom of heaven." Even after his resurrection, just before his ascension, his disciples appeared to still have the narrow idea or notion that the kingdom of Christ was simply the temporal kingdom of Israel-restored (Acts 1:6).

To-day, among some who are advocating *The Plea to Restore the Apostolic Church*, there are narrow ideas and inadequate conceptions of that divine institution called "the church." It is hard, it appears, for some good brethren to learn that the expression, "the church of God," or "the church of Christ," in its New Testament sense, never can mean less than *all* Christians in a given locality, or all Christians everywhere upon the face of the earth. To use the expression, "*the* church of Christ," to designate only a part of the Christians in a particular locality, or to designate only a part, or a small number, of the Christians on the earth, is to have narrow ideas and narrow conceptions of that institution called *the church* in the New Testament. Furthermore, to use the expression, "*the* church of Christ," in this narrow

sense, is the doctrine of sectism full grown! Even some of these good brethren of narrow ideas will affirm, in debate with some denominational preacher, this proposition: "The church [meaning simply his own people] with which I stand identified is *the* church of Christ." At the same time the affirmant of this proposition will plead for the union of Christians, when there can be no Christians outside of the New Testament "church of Christ"! Therefore, in the very nature of things, since a part can not be the whole nor the whole contracted into the part, no religious body, or body of Christians, can be "*the* church of Christ," unless it includes all Christians in one place or all Christians in every place. To conceive of "*the* church of Christ" otherwise is to have narrow ideas of that divine institution.

Again, to designate the people who are making The Plea to Restore the Apostolic Church as "*the* Christian Church," using the expression as the equivalent of the expression, "*the* church of Christ," is a narrow and sectarian idea of that institution which Jesus calls "*my church.*" It should ever be borne in mind, that those who are pleading for the restoration of primitive apostolic Christianity are, as individuals, Christians only, and, as local congregations, churches of Christ only; and that in the aggre-

gate they are not "*the church*," nor even *a church*. Those who plead for the restoration of New Testament Christianity are advocating the unity, or union, of all Christians; hence they are not the only Christians, but Christians only, while many other professed Christians are something else beside being Christians; and that something else consists in belonging to some modern denomination or sect. Narrowness, especially in reference to what the church is and its nature, is one of the dangers confronting those who make *The Plea to Restore the Apostolic Church*.

3d. THE DANGER OF BROAD-GAUGISM.—By *broad-gaugism* is here meant that particular species of latitudinarianism which is, so to speak, more liberal and more broad than the whole gospel of the Christ. It is a tendency to "soften down" some of the plain commandments and threatenings of the "Old Jerusalem gospel." It often stands for a kind of "goody-goodyism" which does not mean anything particular nor believe anything particular, but at the same time it can pin its faith to the coat-tail of most any kind of a teacher and accept, in a measure, the dogmas of any modern denominational church. It has a way of gushing over everybody and everything in spasms of broad liberality!



Often this broad-gaugism is seen on the part of broad and liberal preachers who try to have people saved or squeezed into heaven on less terms, or conditions, than those given in the gospel of the Christ. Such passages as "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that disbelieveth shall be condemned," and "Except a man be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom," are often interpreted to mean far less, or require less, than the Lord commands in these plain declarations. This broad-gaugism has gone so far in its "softening-down" process as to translate out of the New Testament the word "hell" by substituting the words, "the pit," as is seen in what is called "The Twentieth Century New Testament." In another century, perhaps, these "broad-gaugers" will take "the pit" out, and teach that everybody, sinners and all, will go to heaven, as there is no old-fashioned "hell"!

The tendency to liberalize divine teaching and preach "smooth things" to the people, is a hurtful tendency which can only mean mischief in the end. It means the breaking down of the plain teaching and authority of the Christ in reference to salvation and its conditions, and substituting human teaching and human wisdom. Sometimes the cry of this broad-gaugism is heard in these mellow words: "We must

be broad and liberal toward all." This cry is all right provided this broadness and liberality are not broader and more liberal than the whole gospel of the Christ. The dear Lord does not require any one to be broader and more liberal than the New Testament in which is found the limit of all liberality toward all men. When broad-gauge teaching gets the idea into the mind "that one church is as good as another," and that "it does not make much difference what one believes so that he is honest and good at heart," then danger comes to those who make *The Plea to Restore the Apostolic Church*.

One of the great dangers of this broad, liberalizing tendency is to destroy all faith in the miraculous and in the superhuman Christ. This is fully illustrated in the broad-gaugism of the Unitarians and in the school of "advanced thought" now infesting many of the denominational churches. Some bright young preachers have already made shipwreck of their faith and gone into outright infidelity by trying to get too broad and too liberal in their faith. Certainly, this should be a warning in reference to broad-gaugism, which is one of the dangers confronting those who are making *The Plea to Restore the Apostolic Church*.

4th. THE DANGER OF COMPROMISE.—When the mighty reformer and Old Testament prophet, Nehemiah, after the long apostasy and captivity of the Jews, began to rebuild the city of Jerusalem and restore the ancient faith and worship of the people of God, he met with bitter opposition from an alien people who had gathered into the land of the Jews. Nehemiah and his faithful workmen wrought night and day; “every one with one of his hands wrought in the work, and with the other hand held a weapon.” Thus the walls of the city and the temple of God were rebuilt in the midst of great opposition. When the alien people failed in their opposition they then began to ridicule and make fun, and say of the work of Nehemiah and his faithful laborers: “Even that which they build, if a fox go up, he shall even break down their stone wall” (Neh. 4:3). After the opposition failed in its ridicule and fun, it then proposed a compromise by sending a message to Nehemiah to meet in “one of the villages of the plain of Ono,” saying, “Come now, therefore, and let us take counsel together.” Nehemiah said: “But they thought to do me mischief. And I sent messengers unto them, saying, I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down: why should the work cease whilst I leave it, and come down to you?” (Neh.

6:2, 3). Nehemiah refused to leave his great work and parley with his opposers in the way of making a compromise, and thus he made his work a great success. Compromise often means simply a surrender to the opposition. To that people who are to-day, as it were, engaged in the great work of rebuilding the spiritual Jerusalem and restoring the primitive faith, worship and practice of the apostles, here is a lesson in reference to the danger of compromise.

In the beginning, when that people who labored to restore apostolic Christianity were a feeble flock, the opposition often met them with ridicule and caricature; but now, since that people have grown great in numbers, the same old opposition has begun to flatter them and make love to them in saying, they are "orthodox" and "evangelical," and a great many other nice things. It is to be feared that it is the same old game, like the opposers of Nehemiah's work, to get up some sort of a compromise. Denominationalism has now already begun to seek a compromise with those who are Christians only, and belong to the church of Christ only. Denominationalism has gone so far in the way of getting up a compromise as to even induce some who claim to be committed to *The Plea to Restore the Apostolic Church*, to concede that they also are a denomination. In

some quarters they boldly affirm, "We are a denomination, just like other denominations." Hence they prate about "our denomination," "our church," even "our baptisms," and so on. Coquetting with denominationalism will lead to a compromise and finally to a virtual surrender of The Plea to Restore the Apostolic Church. Perhaps the greatest danger now confronting those who are making this Plea in the midst of unparalleled success, is the danger of compromise with denominationalism.

5th. THE DANGER OF MAKING FALSE TESTS OF FELLOWSHIP.—*Fellowship* means a common communion, or a participation in common. Where there is a participation in common, there is communion or fellowship. All true Christians have a participation in common in the gracious salvation which is in Christ, on the very same terms or conditions. All those *in Christ* are in fellowship with the Christ, and must be in fellowship with one another. Then it necessarily follows that whatever are the terms of salvation, or the conditions of entering into Christ, must be the terms of all Christian fellowship, and the only terms, or tests, of Christian fellowship. In other words, nothing should be made a test of fellowship that is not a term, or condition, of salvation. Faith in Christ and obedience to him are the gospel terms

of salvation, or the conditions of entering into Christ. Therefore, faith in the Christ and obedience to him are the sole terms, or tests, of Christian fellowship. Certainly the very terms by which one has fellowship with the Christ, which are faith in the Christ and obedience to him, are also the very same terms by which all in Christ have fellowship one with another.

The Scriptures nowhere teach that matters of mere opinion, methods of work, questions of expediency or forms of worship are to be made tests of Christian fellowship. All such are false tests of fellowship which have produced many of the sects and much of the sectarianism that are to-day among professed Christians. Paul says: "But him that is weak in faith receive ye, yet not to doubtful disputations" (Rom. 14:1). The words "doubtful disputations" evidently refer to opinions, or mere matters of opinion, which are not to be tests of fellowship, or of receiving even "him that is weak in faith." In violation of Paul's teaching, sometimes the use of an instrument in the song service, and missionary societies—mere methods of work—are made tests of Christian fellowship and co-operation, to that extent that even some leave the church and disfellowship their brethren. While it may be granted, for argument's sake, that these things are wrong, or inexpedient, they can

never be Scripture tests of Christian fellowship, communion and co-operation; to make them such is to produce strife and division in the churches of God. Right in these false tests of Christian fellowship lies one great danger confronting those who make The Plea to Restore the Apostolic Church.

6th. THE DANGER OF TOO MUCH THEORY AND NOT ENOUGH PRACTICE.—Often, in any kind of movement or work, there is much theorizing and philosophizing and not so much practice. It is an easy matter to theorize in reference to most anything, but more difficult to put into practice. This is an age of much theorizing in reference to many things, and it is also true in reference to Christianity and its teaching. When theory and practice go hand in hand together, there is usually success; but too much theory and not enough practice, means failure in any undertaking or work.

Those who make The Plea to Restore the Apostolic Church are certainly right in *theory*; there can be no question about this in the mind of any who understand the Plea. But what about the *practice*? This is a most vital point, worthy of the most serious consideration and prayerful attention. The Plea, simply in theory and not put into practice, will never accomplish its great aim or purpose, but will go in



the way of all human failures; but the Plea put into faithful practice will surely take the world for Christ. But one of the dangers confronting the people who are making The Plea to Restore the Apostolic Church, is the danger of too much theory and not enough faithful practice. While the people who are making this Plea are a grand people, and have grown to be a great and mighty people, who have largely put into practice the Plea, the results of which will be felt in all eternity, still there is a greater and grander work to be accomplished by a faithful practice of the Plea in all its phases.

Of all people, those who make The Plea to Restore the Apostolic Church ought to be the most practical, zealous, earnest and pious people. They ought to do more for charity, for education, for the proclamation of the gospel in all the world, and for the betterment of the human family, than any other people on the earth. They ought to practice more giving, more love, more real Christian unity and more real piety and godliness than any other people. Above all, they ought to be the most Christlike, and be foremost in every move for the union of all Christians. They should be and do all this because the great Plea which they advocate demands all this, no more nor less. The Plea itself demands that the theory shall



be put into practice. When a comparison is made with all that the denominational churches are doing, this becomes a burning question: "*What do ye more than others?*" When the love, zeal, piety and sacrifice, often found in many of those of the denominations, are considered, can it be said of those who make the Plea, that they do more than others, or even as much? Surely here is the place for serious reflection and more thorough consecration to the Plea, to the dear Lord and all his work.

When all the advocates of The Plea to Restore the Apostolic Church put into practice the Plea, then there will be no trouble in raising money to build churches and preach the gospel in all lands. There will be no trouble in raising the necessary means to build up necessary schools and endow colleges. Above all, the Plea put into practice will give it complete success in spite of all the dangers that may confront its advocates. Steadfastness to the Plea, in all things, will bring glorious success to pure apostolic Christianity, and successfully meet every danger confronting it.



## CHAPTER XII.

### OBJECTIONS TO THE TEACHING OF THOSE WHO MAKE THE PLEA.

Those who make The Plea to Restore the Apostolic Church have been met all the while with some objections which need to be noticed. These objections have been made to what is supposed, on some vital points, not to be the teaching of those who make the Plea, and, also, to what the teaching is supposed to be. These objections have grown largely out of the lack of proper understanding of what the teaching really is. Then, again, these objections have grown out of mere prejudice and ignorance. To clear up these objections, it is necessary to make a plain and brief presentation of the teaching on all vital points where objections have been raised, which now will be done after stating each objection in numerical order. The objections which have been so often made and so often met and set aside, which are still being made by some people, are here given in the language of the objectors. as follows:

1st. *"You people do not teach the change of heart."* This old objection is still made by some prejudiced and misinformed people. Those who

make *The Plea to Restore the Apostolic Church*, put great emphasis, in their teaching, upon the absolute necessity of the thorough change of the heart of all those who turn to the Lord. There must be a deep, vital change of the heart on the part of every sinner in turning to the Christ. In the very first act in becoming a child of God, the sinner must believe in the Christ with the whole heart, which involves a radical change of the heart in reference to sin, a change of the heart from the love of sin to the love of the Christ. Alexander Campbell, in his debate with N. L. Rice, in 1843, said: "No man believes more cordially, or teaches more fully, the necessity of a spiritual change of our affections—a change of heart—than I do" (*Campbell-Rice Debate*, p. 544). Mr. Campbell further says: "Our Reformation began in the conviction of the inadequacy of the corrupted forms of religion in popular use, to effect that thorough change of heart and life which the gospel contemplates as so essential to admission into heaven" (*Debate*, p. 678).

2d. "*You people do not teach Scripture repentance.*" What the denominations usually call "Scripture repentance" is simply sorrow for sin or soul agony on the account of sin. Scripture repentance means far more than sorrow for sin. Paul says of

the Corinthians: "Ye were made sorry unto repentance" (2 Cor. 7:9). Sorrow leads to repentance, produces or works repentance. The original word translated "repentance," as commanded in the gospel, means the change of mind, or the change of the will, in reference to sin. In other words, gospel repentance means the change of the will produced by sorrow for sin leading to a reformation of life and all possible reparation or restitution. Therefore, gospel repentance involves a sincere sorrow for sin, a change of the will in reference to sin and a turning away from sin. Nothing short of this is the repentance commanded in the gospel. This, and this only, is the repentance ever taught by those who make The Plea to Restore the Apostolic Church.

3d. *"You people do not teach Scripture conversion."* Those who make this charge usually hold that conversion is simply the change of heart, or the change wrought in the heart by some miraculous power of the Holy Spirit. Those who plead for the restoration of apostolic Christianity teach that conversion is the whole process of turning from sin to the Lord; that conversion means to "turn again;" to turn back to the Lord from a life of sin in which the sinner went away from the Lord; that faith in the Christ with the whole heart, sincere repentance,

confession of the Christ and baptism—all of them—are turning acts in the whole process of turning to the Christ or conversion to the Christ. In all this process of conversion, in which the sinner is active and not passive, there is far more than the change of heart. In conversion to the Christ, or in turning to the Christ, there is certainly the change of heart, and there is the change of conduct effected through genuine repentance, and there is the change of the sinner's relation to Christ out of Christ to "in Christ"—effected through submission to baptism. Therefore Scripture conversion involves a threefold change—a change of heart, a change of conduct, a change of relation—and not simply a change of heart.

4th. *"You people do not teach Scripture regeneration."* The word "regeneration" occurs only two times in the New Testament (Matt. 19:28; Tit. 3:5), and in these occurrences the word is not used in the denominational theological sense at all, but the word means the moral or spiritual renovation, or the process of being "born again." In this spiritual renovation, or being "born again," there is a begetting, or quickening, and a birth. The sinner in being "born again," or in experiencing regeneration, is begotten, or quickened, by the Holy Spirit through

the Word of God—thus “born of the Spirit,” or begotten by the Spirit—and when he is baptized he is “born of water.” This is the Scripture regeneration, but not the regeneration taught by the denominations. The regeneration taught by denominational theology usually means the miraculous quickening of the sinner by some abstract and mysterious influence of the Holy Spirit. Of course, those who plead for the restoration of the original gospel do not teach this abstract and mysterious regeneration; but they do teach the Scripture regeneration of being quickened or begotten by the Spirit through the gospel, and being “born of water” by being baptized.

5th. *“You people do not teach the work of the Holy Spirit.”* By “the work of the Holy Spirit” is here meant the work of the Holy Spirit in conversion and sanctification. The denominations usually teach that the Holy Spirit, by direct impact upon the heart, convicts and converts sinners and sanctifies Christians, while those who make The Plea to Restore the Apostolic Church, teach that the Holy Spirit does all this work of conviction, conversion and sanctification *through* the Word of God. Alexander Campbell said more than fifty years ago: “I would not, sir, value at the price of a single mill the

religion of any man, as respects the grand affair of eternal life, whose religion is not begun, carried on, and completed by the personal agency of the Holy Spirit. Nay, sir, I esteem it the peculiar excellence and glory of our religion, that it is *spiritual*; that the soul of man is quickened, enlightened, sanctified and consoled by the indwelling presence of the Spirit of the eternal God. But, while avowing these, my convictions, I have no more fellowship with those false and pernicious theories that confound the peculiar work of the Father with that of the Son, or with that of the Holy Spirit, or the work of any of these awful names with that of another; or which represents our illumination, conversion and sanctification as the work of the Spirit without the knowledge, belief and obedience of the gospel, as written by the holy apostles and evangelists, than I have with the author and finisher of the Book of Mormon" (*Campbell-Rice Debate*, p. 616).

6th. "You people teach that faith is simply the assent of the mind to the truth." Those who are pleading for the restoration of the original faith commanded in the gospel hold to no such an idea "that faith is *simply* the assent of the mind to the truth." Faith certainly means the assent of the mind to the truth, but it also means far more than



“simply the assent of the mind to the truth.” In proof, these words from Alexander Campbell are to the point: “Now, as faith in God is the first principle—the soul-renewing principle of religion; as it is the regenerating, justifying, sanctifying principle; without it, it is impossible to be acceptable to God. With it, a man is a son of Abraham, a son of God; an heir-apparent to eternal life—an everlasting kingdom. And what is Christian faith? It is a belief of testimony. It is a persuasion that God is true; that the gospel is divine; that God is love; that Christ’s death is the sinner’s life. It is trust in God. It is a reliance upon his truth, his faithfulness, his power. It is not merely a cold assent to truth, to testimony; but a cordial, joyful consent to it, and reception of it” (*Campbell-Rice Debate*, p. 618).

7th. “*You people teach baptismal salvation or regeneration.*” Those who plead for the restoration of the primitive teaching of Christ and his apostles wholly repudiate every thought and idea contained in this objection. By “baptismal salvation” is meant that a person is saved by baptism only; or that a person can not be saved without baptism. By “baptismal regeneration” is meant that regeneration, or “divine grace,” is imparted in the act of baptism.

While some of the denominational creeds contain the idea of baptismal salvation, or baptismal regeneration, those who are Christians only, and belong to the church of Christ only, abominate such false and offensive teaching. All the water or baptism of earth avails nothing unless there is first faith with the whole heart—in which the heart is thoroughly changed, sincere repentance and a confession of the faith of the whole heart in the Christ; to all those who possess these gospel prerequisites, baptism is a condition of enjoying salvation, or remission of sins, procured by the atoning death or cleansing blood of the Son of God. All salvation, or remission of sins, is grounded in the atoning sacrifice made by the Christ on the cross. Therefore, the idea of baptismal salvation or regeneration is a false doctrine, which is wholly rejected by those who are pleading the restoration of the primitive practice in all things. The following quotations from Alexander Campbell will suffice on this point:

“But our opponents have done us a great deal of injustice, in representing us as pleading for ‘*water regeneration*.’ They have endeavored to preach us down, and sing us down, and write us down, by holding us up to public reprobation, as advocates of a mere baptismal regeneration; but they have not

succeeded, nor can they succeed, with any who will either hear us or read us on these subjects. No man believes more cordially, or teaches more fully, the necessity of a spiritual change of our affections—a change of heart—than I do. I have said a thousand times, that if a person were to be immersed twice seven times in the Jordan for the remission of his sins, or for the reception of the Holy Spirit, it would avail nothing more than wetting the face of a babe, unless his heart is changed by the Word and Spirit of God. I have no confidence in any instrumentality, ordinance, means, or observance unless the *heart is turned to God*. This is the fundamental, the capital point; but, with these, every other divine ordinance is essential for the spiritual enlargement, confirmation, and sanctification of the faithful” (*Debate*, p. 544). On page 555 of the “Debate” Mr. Campbell further says:

“1. While we regard immersion, or Christian baptism, as a wise, benevolent, and useful institution, we neither disparage, nor underrate, a new heart, repentance, or faith; nay, we teach with great clearness and definiteness, that unpreceded by faith and repentance, it is of no value whatsoever. These two constitute a change of heart, a mental conversion; for all believing penitents have a new heart, and

are prepared for being born into the kingdom of God.

“2. But in the second place, we insist upon the essential importance of baptism as a divine institution, because Jesus Christ enacts no superfluities. In his religion there is not one ordinance that is not essential for some purpose; all-important to Christian life, health, or usefulness. Not one of them, therefore, can with safety be dispensed with. Who, then, think you, acts more rationally; he that practically maintains faith, repentance and baptism; or he that dispenses with any one of them, as, in his judgment, unnecessary or inexpedient? The strongest argument for anything, and the best reason for doing anything, is, that the Lord Jesus Christ has commanded it. A sound discretion, and a sound judgment, give to everything its proper place and no more. Neither faith, nor repentance, nor baptism, severally, nor altogether, are everything in religion. But each one of them is indispensable, and no one of them can be a substitute for another. A person is not to be justified nor saved by faith alone. No man can trifle with baptism, so long as he remembers that Jesus said, ‘He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.’ What God has joined together, let no man separate.”

8th. *"You people teach that you are THE church, THE Christian Church."* This is altogether a mistake; no such an idea, at all, is maintained by those who are pleading a return to the original church of Christ in all things. Again and again, over and over, it has been stated, that those who make The Plea to Restore the Apostolic Church, are not, as a people, or in the aggregate, *a church* nor *the church*. "*The church*" or "*the Christian Church*"—using the expression as equivalent to the expression "*the church of Christ*"—means, in its broad sense, *all* Christians in every place, or the whole body of Christ on the earth. Those who are pleading for the restoration of "*the faith*" in all things, claim to be, as individuals, simply common disciples of the Christ, or Christians simply; and in church relation they claim to be "*churches of Christ*" simply, no more nor less. So, then, the objection is based wholly upon a mistaken idea of what this people, who make The Plea to Restore the Apostolic Church, in reality do teach. Study carefully the great Restoration Movement of the nineteenth century, and no such objection will ever be made, for there is no foundation for it whatever.

9th. *"You people claim to be the only Christians, for you wear the name Christians in an exclu-*

*sive sense.*" Here are two objections, or erroneous charges, without any foundation in fact. There is quite a difference between these two propositions, "A is a Christian *only*," and "A is the *only* Christian." The former proposition does not deny that there are other Christians, but it affirms that A is a Christian and not something else religiously; while the latter proposition affirms that A is a Christian, and that nobody else is a Christian besides A. Hence, those who plead for the restoration of the New Testament names of the professed followers of the Christ are Christians *only*, but not the *only* Christians. Neither do those who make this Plea wear the name "Christians" in an exclusive sense. They claim that all the children of God are equally entitled to this name; and they are earnestly insisting that all the children of the one common heavenly Father shall wear the name "Christians" exclusive of all denominational or sectarian names.

10th. "*You people teach that immersion is the only mode of Christian baptism.*" Those who plead for the restoration of the Apostolic Church teach that when Christ commanded baptism he employed a word which has a definite and specific meaning, and had he done otherwise, no one could ever tell, or know, when he had obeyed the command of the

Christ. The question in reference to baptism is not a question of *mode*, but the question is, What is the thing itself, or act, called baptism? If pouring or sprinkling or immersion is a "mode," then what is that thing of which pouring, sprinkling and immersion are the "modes"? The thing itself is that definite, specific something commanded by the Lord, and that specific something commanded by the Lord is expressed in the very word employed by Christ when he commanded baptism. When Christ commanded baptism he had before him the Greek words which mean "to pour," "to sprinkle," "to purify," respectively, but he did not employ either one of these words to designate the act he commanded when he commanded baptism; but he did employ a Greek word in commanding baptism which all the Greek-English lexicons and the scholarship of the religious world say, means "to dip" or "to immerse." Therefore, when Christ commanded baptism he commanded immersion and immersion only; the immersion of a proper subject in water "into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." Hence, immersion is not a "mode" of baptism, but it is baptism itself. All this talk about "modes" of baptism is sectarian jargon, born of the great



apostasy from "the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints."

In the foregoing objections are to be found the leading objections made, in the past fifty years, to the teaching of those who make *The Plea to Restore the Apostolic Church*. It will be readily seen that most of these objections are based upon a misunderstanding of the teaching of those who make this Plea, and that not one objection is valid, or but what can be met and set aside. All of this being true, then *The Plea to Restore the Apostolic Church* must ultimately triumph, provided its advocates are loyal to it in all things. Should the present advocates of the Plea become unfaithful, God will raise up another people who will carry forward the Plea to a glorious success. May Heaven bless the Plea, and a gracious God lead its advocates into all truth, as it is in Jesus, is the devout wish of the writer of this little book.

THE END.









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